

FACULTY OF LAW, THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
ASIAN INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL LAW

and

RGC Theme-based Research Scheme Project:
“Enhancing Hong Kong’s Future as a Leading International Financial Centre”

Seminar

**Why Some Firms Thrive While Others Fail:
Governance and Management
Lessons From the Crisis**

Thomas H. Stanton

Fellow, Center for Advanced Governmental Studies

Johns Hopkins University

Wednesday, 27 March 2013

12:30-1:30 pm

Academic Conference Room, 11/F Cheng Yu Tung Tower

The University of Hong Kong

Why did some firms successfully navigate the financial crisis while others failed? The single most important factor was the posture of the CEO, and by extension, the culture and processes available at firms to make sound decisions at a time of uncertainty. Top managers at successful firms solicited feedback continuously; by contrast leaders of failed firms disregarded or discouraged input from their boards of directors, management teams, risk officers, and regulators. Review of other major company failures, such as the BP Gulf oil spill or fatalities caused by explosions at US company facilities, reveals a similar pattern of weak oversight and CEOs impervious to feedback. Thomas H. Stanton served on the staff of the US Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission. He will discuss the financial crisis, what it revealed about shortcomings in the incentives, management, and structure of US companies and regulators, and what we need to do to improve our institutions.

Thomas H. Stanton is a Fellow of the Center for Advanced Governmental Studies at Johns Hopkins University, a former director of the National Academy of Public Administration, and a former member of the federal Senior Executive Service. His publications include two books on government-sponsored enterprises (GSEs) and two edited books on federal organization and management. Concerns expressed in *A State of Risk: Will Government Sponsored Enterprises be the Next Financial Crisis?* (HarperCollins, 1991) helped lead to enactment of several pieces of legislation and the creation of a new GSE regulator. The book also first presented the idea of contingent capital that is now being considered for major financial institutions. Mr. Stanton’s B.A. degree is from the University of California at Davis, M.A. from Yale University, and J.D. from the Harvard Law School. He is fluent in German and has conducted research in several countries. Mr. Stanton’s most recent book is *Why Some Firms Thrive While Others Fail: Governance and Management Lessons from the Crisis* (Oxford University Press, July 2012).

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email Flora Leung at fkleung@hku.hk to reserve a place.**