



## MEMORANDUM

Agenda Item 15(C)1

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TO: Honorable Chairman Bruno A. Barreiro, and  
Members, Board of County Commissioners

DATE: December 16, 2008

FROM: Honorable Harvey Ruvin, Clerk  
Circuit and County Courts

SUBJECT: Appointment of Brian Peterson  
to the Social and Economic  
Development Council of  
Miami-Dade County

Kay Sullivan, Director  
Clerk of the Board Division

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It is recommended that the Board consider the appointment of Brian Peterson to serve as a member of the Social and Economic Development Council (SEDC) for Miami-Dade County.

Miami Dade County Ordinance 02-120, adopted by the Board of County Commissioners on July 9, 2002, established the Council and the initial members of the Council. The Office of Community and Economic Development, Community and Economic Development Division, on behalf of the SEDC, has submitted the name of Brian Peterson as an eligible nominee.

Brian Peterson's resume is attached for your review.

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Attachments

**Brian Peterson  
Curriculum Vitae  
June 2, 2008**

**Born:**

Anamosa, Iowa, 1942

**Education:**

BA: Drake University, 1964

MA: University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1965  
Modern European History

PhD: University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1976  
Modern European History

Dissertation: German Working Class Voting in the Reichstag Election of  
December, 1924

**Employment:**

Teaching Assistant, North Carolina A&T College, Greensboro, 1965-66

Teaching Assistant, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Visiting Assistant Professor, University of Southern California, Fall, 1972

Assistant Professor, Florida International University, January, 1973-78

Associate Professor, Florida International University, 1978-present

**Scholarly work:**

The Social Bases of Working-Class Politics in the Weimar Republic: The  
Reichstag Election of December, 1924, PhD dissertation, 1976

“Working-Class Communism: A Review of the Literature,” Radical  
America, January-February, 1971

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“The Politics of Working-Class Women in the Weimar Republic,” Central European History, June, 1977

“Regional Elites and the Rise of National Socialism, 1920-1933,” in Radical Perspectives on the Rise of Fascism in Germany, 1919-1945, edited by Michael N. Dobkowski and Isidor Walliman, Monthly Review Press, 1989

**Florida Endowment for the Humanities/ Florida Humanities Council Projects:**

**1975: The Cuban Impact Conference.** An all-day meeting on the impact of Cuban immigration on Miami and the impact of Miami on Cuban exiles. The keynote address was by Miami Mayor Maurice Ferre. The main focus of the conference was on practical measures that could be taken by both the city and by Cuban immigrants to integrate them more fully into Miami politics (becoming citizens), education and health care. We discussed Cuban clinics which are much like American HMOs. I was the director of this conference.

**1980-81: Old Age and Human Values.** This was a series of humanities-oriented meetings including lectures, panel discussions and film showings dealing with the understanding of aging in art, literature, film and philosophy. Meetings were held in senior citizen centers across the county. I was the director of this series of programs.

**Teaching:**

**World Civilizations course:** For the past fifteen years or so, I have taught World Civilizations each semester. For the past several years, this course has had very large enrollments in both its classroom and fully online variants. The course uses “Problem-Based Learning” in which students work in groups to research complex historical situations. Each student writes an individual paper that fits within an overall group paper.

This course also has each section of 30 students put on a skit related to the theme of the course early in the semester. Over the past two years, the theme has been the Silk Road.

At the end of the course, each section develops and displays an art project related to the theme of the course. The art project must be an installation, an art video or performance art.

**Upper-division European history courses:** These courses are also using "Problem-Based Learning, but they include both shorter papers and a longer term paper. Over the past year, the themes of the longer papers have included "Court Politics in France between 1600 and 1815," "High Culture in Nazi Germany," and "The Impact of the French Revolution on Other Countries."

#### **University Service:**

As the main undergraduate advisor for the History Department, I am an ex-officio member of the History Department's Undergraduate Committee.

I am a long-time representative in the Faculty Senate.

#### **Community Activities:**

**Miami Education Review:** For the past seven years, I have put out a daily email newsletter, *Miami Education Review*, with a subscription list of around 75 people. The most persistent concern of the newsletter has been improving graduation rates and academic achievement levels in schools in low-income neighborhoods in Miami-Dade County.

**Education Policy Analysis:** For the past 22 years, I have written educational policy analysis studies that I have shared with the Miami-Dade County Public Schools School Board and top administration and with the United Teachers of Dade. These papers were often written with students through the Honors Student Mentor Group of the Jack D. Gordon Institute for Public Policy and Citizenship Studies.

Among the reforms which these studies helped to bring about were: the requirement of community service to graduate from high school; daily compulsory reading time of one hour, with half to be carried out in school and half at home; the implementation of the Success for All curriculum in about fifty low-scoring elementary schools.

**Four Years for FIU:** In 1978,-1981, I did the research and writing for the FIU Faculty for a Four-year University. We worked with State Senator Jack Gordon to bring about a lower-division program for FIU, FAU, UNF and UWF. These universities were all originally established as upper-division schools.

**Community College Baccalaureates:** During the 1990s, I wrote many policy analysis papers and newspaper articles for the Miami Times advocating baccalaureate degree programs for Miami-Dade Community College and the other Florida community colleges. Around 1998, I wrote a 35-page paper on this subject and sent it to the community college presidents. They discussed the paper as the main item of business in one of their meetings and voted 27 to 1 to pursue the baccalaureate. Several Florida community colleges now offer bachelor's degrees.

**Lotus House:** For the past two year, my students and I have been tutoring women living in a homeless shelter in Overtown. My students tutor in the women GED math and in spoken English. Lotus House is directed by Constance Collins, and the chief source of funding has been Martin Margulies, a Miami property developer. I am a member of the Board of Directors of the Sundari Foundation which runs the shelter.