

Scott J. Peters

Scott J. Peters is co-director of Imagining America: Artists and Scholars in Public Life (IA) and a Syracuse University professor in the Cultural Foundations of Education department in the School of Education. He has devoted his professional career to studying and strengthening higher education's public mission, purposes, and work. His research agenda focuses on the connections between higher education and democracy, especially in the land-grant system. His most recent book, *Democracy and Higher Education: Traditions and Stories of Civic Engagement* (Michigan State University Press, 2010), contributes to a new line of research on the critically important task of strengthening and defending higher education's positive roles in and for a democratic society. He is the author of Imagining America's Foreseeable Futures position paper, "Changing the Story About Higher Education's Public Purposes and Work: Land-Grants, Liberty, and the Little Country Theater."

A nationally recognized scholar, Peters has designed and pursued independent research projects with significant support from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Kettering Foundation. He is on the leadership team of a national five-year initiative, funded with a \$5 million grant from USDA, called "Food Dignity: Action Research on Engaging Food Insecure Communities and Universities in Building Sustainable Community Food Systems."

At Cornell since 1999, Peters established an innovative teaching and research program that interweaves democratic theory and political and educational philosophy with historical and narrative methods. Before Cornell, he spent two years as an assistant professor of public work with the University of Minnesota Extension System. He received two graduate degrees at the University of Minnesota: a master's degree in public affairs from the Humphrey School of Public Affairs, and a Ph.D. in educational policy and administration. Before his graduate work, he served for 10 years as program director of one of the nation's oldest community-university partnerships, the University YMCA at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where he received his bachelor's degree in education.