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### ELLEN PETERS

Professor  
Psychology  
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#### Education

Ph.D., Psychology, Judgment and Decision Making, University of Oregon (1998)  
M.S. Psychology, Judgment and Decision Making, University of Oregon (1994)  
B.S. Economics, B.S.E., Systems Engineering, University of Pennsylvania (1989)

#### Teaching/Research

Ellen Peters is professor of psychology and director of the [Decision Sciences Collaborative](#) at The Ohio State University.

She is former president of the Society for Judgment and Decision Making, former chair of FDA's Risk Communication Advisory Committee, and a current member of the National Academies committee on the Science of Science Communication. She has also worked extensively with the U.S. National Cancer Institute and Food and Drug Administration to advance the science of human decision making as it applies to health and health policy.

In her research, Peters focuses on understanding the basic building blocks of human judgment and decision making. She is particularly interested in how affective, intuitive, and deliberative processes help people to make decisions in an increasingly complex world. She studies decision making as an interaction of characteristics of the decision situation and characteristics of the individual.

Peters has three major strands of basic research. First, she studies how numbers are processed in judgment and decision making. In recent publications, Peters and colleagues have focused on how numbers critical to decisions are processed by individuals who differ in number ability (also called numeracy).

A second central strand of research concerns how affect and emotion influence information processing and decisions. Affect appears to have multiple functions in judgment and decision processes (as information, as a common currency, as a spotlight on information, and as a direct motivator of behaviors).

Third, she is interested in how information processing and decision making change in complex ways across the adult life span. In applied research, she is also generally interested in issues of risk perception and risk communication in health, financial, and environmental contexts, including how to present information to facilitate its comprehension and use.

Recently, she has been quite interested in the psychological mechanisms underlying tobacco use and prevention and how to "nudge" people towards healthier behaviors.

Peters is a fellow of the American Psychological Association, the Association for Psychological Science and the Society of Experimental Psychology. She was the first American to receive the Jane Beattie Scientific Recognition Award, and she has been



awarded an NIH Merit Award. Her research has been funded extensively by the National Science Foundation and National Institutes of Health.

**Faculty Links**

- [Curriculum Vitae](#) (pdf)
- [Department web page](#)
- [Cognitive and Affective Influences in Decision Making \(CAIDe\) Lab](#)
- [High-resolution photo](#)

**Media Links**

- Ohio State News: [Five Ohio State faculty named AAAS Fellows](#) (2018)
- Changing Climate: [Why we don't believe science: a perspective from decision psychology](#) (2016)
- Decision Sciences: [Ellen Peters appointed to NAS Committee on the Science of Science Communication](#) (2015)
- Media Relations: [When do we tend to make the best decisions?](#) (2014)

**Mershon Project**

- [Risk and Security](#), with Allan Silverman and Christopher Gelpi (2015-16)

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