# MEG GEBHARD

Dr. Meg Gebhard is a Professor of Applied Linguistics and the Co-Director of the Secondary English Education Program at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Her scholarship is informed by a critical social semiotic perspective of language, learning, and social change and aims to strengthen the capacity of public schools to enact equitable and anti-racist educational practices and policies. Using qualitative methods and the tools of critical discourse analysis, her research focuses on the disciplinary literacy development of multilingual learners, the professional development of their teachers, and the discourses of school reform. She has published in leading journals such as English Teaching: Practice & Critique; Journal of Second Language Writing; Language Arts; Linguistics and Education; Modern Language Journal; and the TESOL Quarterly. In addition, her book, Teaching and researching ELLs' disciplinary literacy practices: SFL in action in the context of school reform (Routledge), was a finalist for the American Association of Applied Linguistics in 2021. She currently serves on several editorial boards including English Teaching: Practice & Critique and Language Arts and is on the advisory boards of a number of local, state, national, and international organizations.

## *Supporting ELLs' disciplinary literacies in schools: Methodological considerations in genre-based research*

Meg Gebhard

This presentation will introduce an action-oriented approach to designing, implementing, and researching K-12 students' disciplinary literacy development using systemic functional linguistics (SFL) and related pedagogical practices to L2 writing scholars (Christie & Derewianka, 2008; Halliday, 1993; Hasan, 2004; Martin & Rose, 2008; Rose & Martin, 2012; Unsworth, 2008; see Gebhard, 2019). This presentation will have three parts: First, I will outline a social semiotic conceptual framework for analyzing text/context dynamics in classrooms. This perspective takes into account the historical, political, and institutional contexts in which teachers work and their students attempt to expand their multilingual/multimodal resources through the development of genre knowledge and awareness of the register choices writers make in producing texts for specific purposes and audiences.

Second, I will describe how this framework informs a comprehensive methodology for collecting data and analyzing student writing development as well as a pedagogical approach to designing curriculum, instruction, and assessments. This approach builds on students' linguistic repertoires and apprentices them to read, discuss, and write disciplinary texts for authentic purposes and audiences. This praxis-oriented methodology expands on SFL's Teaching and Learning Cycle in key ways that are intended to support students' academic development, facilitate teachers' professional development, and inform L2 writing research and educational policies (Gebhard, 2019).

Third, I will provide an example of this social semiotic conceptual framework, methodology for researching L2 writing development, and approach to designing instruction by presenting data from longitudinal case studies of changes in the disciplinary literacy practices of refugee youth attending an under-resourced urban high school in the United States (Accurso, Gebhard, Harris, & Schuetz, in press). This study demonstrates the potential of SFL action research to enhance students' disciplinary literacies and

teachers' professional development as well as to inform L2 writing research from an action research perspective.