



SPEAKER PACKET

Dr. Deborah S. Greenhut, PhD

College Identity & Student Success Speaker

Email:

Deborah.Greenhut@collegeidentityspeaker.com

Voicemail:

+1-323-510-8816

Website:

www.collegeidentityspeaker.com

My Story Is My Lifeline

A Keynote on Identity, Agency, and First-Year Success

Dr. Deborah S. Greenhut, PhD

Speaker | Author | Educator
Creator, Narrative Competence Framework
 www.collegeidentityspeaker.com

*“Where students learn to maintain authorship
of their own lives”*

| The Problem

Today's First-Year Reality

Student affairs professionals are navigating a complex convergence of student needs:

- Rising **mental health concerns**
- Difficulty with **transition and independence**
- Gaps in **academic self-management**
- Fragile **sense of belonging**
- Increasing **financial pressure**

These are not isolated challenges.

Students experience them as a **single, overwhelming reality**.

When students cannot make sense of their experience, they struggle to make decisions within it.

| THE SOLUTION

Narrative Competence: A Missing Skill

Most programming provides:

- Resources
- Information
- Support systems

But students are missing a core skill:

Narrative Competence

The ability to:

- Understand their experience in real time
- Interpret challenges without self-defeating conclusions
- Make intentional, self-directed choices

An authentic story restores agency—the ability to choose, not just comply.

| THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Keynote: *My Story Is My Lifeline*

This student-facing keynote helps participants:

- ✓ Recognize the **five pressures of the first-year experience**
 - ✓ Normalize challenges without stigma
 - ✓ Reframe internal narratives in real time
 - ✓ Build **decision-making confidence and agency**
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Signature Engagement Moment

Name It → Claim It → Choose It

A guided, 2-minute exercise where students:

- Identify a current challenge
- Recognize their internal narrative
- Shift toward an actionable next step

Outcome:

Students experience **immediate agency and clarity**

Keynotes, Programs, and Workshop Offerings for Students, Faculty, and Professional Staff at Your Institution



KEYNOTE :

"My Story Is My Lifeline"
A Student-Facing Keynote on Identity, Agency, and First-Year Success

Student Takeaways:

- ✓ Recognize the five core pressures of the first-year experience
- ✓ Normalize their challenges without over-pathologizing
- ✓ Learn a 3-step method to reframe difficult experiences:
Name It → Claim It → Choose It
- ✓ Leave with a practical tool for decision-making, resilience, and self-leadership

This keynote supports institutional priorities:

- * Retention & persistence
- * Student mental health & well-being
- * Sense of belonging
- * First-year experience programming
- * Student engagement & self-efficacy

Designed for:

- ✓ First-Year Experience programs
- ✓ Orientation / Welcome Week
- ✓ Student Success initiatives
- ✓ Residence Life programming
- ✓ Leadership development programs

PROGRAM OPTIONS

- 20-minute keynote (ideal for conferences and spotlight sessions)
- 45–60 minute keynote with expanded student interaction
- Add-on workshop: "Narrative Competence in Practice"

Customization
Requests Welcome!



COLLEGE
IDENTITY SPEAKER

Dr. Deborah S. Greenhut, PhD

Keynote Speaker | Educator | Podcast Host |
Creator: The Narrative Competence Framework™

About Deborah:

Dr. Deborah S. Greenhut is a speaker, author, and educator with 40+ years of experience in higher education and corporate training. A former Faculty Member, Dean, and Director at Rutgers University, Hudson County Community College, and New Jersey City University, she specializes in helping students develop authentic strategies for navigating complex life roles with clarity and intention.

Dr. Greenhut is the author of *The Rational Caregiver* (Amazon Best Seller and Top New Release), creator of the Narrative Competence framework. Coming this fall: *Identity Under Construction: A Field Guide for Authentic Identity and Resilience* and *A Guide to Narrative Competence*. Deborah's YouTube project, *The Narrative Commons*, is also scheduled for a Fall 2026 release.

"If students can't make sense of their experience, they can't make decisions inside it."

Book now for Fall student engagement programming:

✉ Contact:

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VM: +1-323-510-8816

| PROGRAM OPTIONS & PRICING

Keynote Options:

Spotlight Keynote (20 minutes)

Ideal for conferences, multi-speaker events

→ High-impact, concise delivery

Standard Keynote (45–60 minutes)

Includes extended engagement and application

→ Best for campus-wide programming

Keynote + Workshop Package

Interactive follow-up session for deeper skill-building

→ Ideal for leadership groups, FYE cohorts

Investment Range:

Keynote Fee:

\$3500-\$5000, *U.S. Travel included*

Workshops / Extended Programming:

Custom pricing available

 Book bundles available for student distribution

| Are your students ready to engage?

Bring This Keynote to Your Campus

Support your students with a skill that connects:

- Mental health
 - Belonging
 - Academic success
 - Retention
-



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