

In the fall, Doug Melton, Ph.D., a national speaker on engineering education, encouraged hundreds of students, faculty, and staff at Rochester Institute of Technology to have an entrepreneurial mindset. “It’s not about creating companies,” said Melton. “Entrepreneurial mindset is about thinking about how you can create value in any context.” Melton added that it would sharpen people individually and impact society.

In September, Melton served as the keynote speaker at the 2019 Eugene H. Fram Signature Lecture in Critical Thinking. The annual event at RIT brings in prominent speakers to discuss the importance of critical thinking in fields from pedagogy and literature to digital technologies and science. The Fram Signature Lecture series is part of a university-wide initiative to develop the application of critical thinking, which connects knowing, doing, and creating.

Melton is the program director of the Entrepreneurial Engineering Program at the Kern Family Foundation. He works closely with faculty and administrators at 45 universities, including RIT, that comprise the Kern Entrepreneurial Engineering Network (KEEN) to develop future generations of entrepreneurially-minded engineers.

When the educator closed his speech, he left the audience with an applied critical thinking exercise. He said, think about the following: “developing a skillset is powerful, but one’s mindset sets the direction.” Melton encouraged the audience to think critically about that statement and the way their actions can impact their lives and the lives of others around them.

“Your story is needed,” he said.