



Each month we spotlight several College of Education Faculty Mentors for you to get to know better. Our wonderful professors and instructors in **Education, Psychology & Counseling, and Health & Kinesiology** are here for you!

**What is a Faculty Mentor?**

A Faculty Mentor can be any NSU professor or instructor. Faculty mentors have in-depth knowledge of their field and are the best resource for expanding students' understanding of their discipline.

**Faculty Mentors are your go-to for help with:**

- Expanding knowledge within your major
- Career exploration and advice
- Internship opportunities
- Research opportunities
- Future academic pursuits
- Graduate programs

**How do I find a Faculty Mentor?**

**Assigned Faculty Mentor**

All students are assigned a Faculty Mentor when you declare a major. You can find who your assigned mentor is at the top of your degree audit ([Degree Works](#)) in the section labeled "Advisors".

**Faculty Mentor for Field of Interest**

Any NSU professor or instructor can serve as your Faculty Mentor, even if they are not assigned to you. Each faculty has an area of expertise that may be better suited for helping you with your specific future goals. Talk with your professors, assigned Faculty Mentor, or [Academic Advisor](#) about finding the right Faculty Mentor for you.

**Need tips on how to connect with professors? Check out the tips & resources sections at the bottom!**

**EDUCATION**

**ELEMENTARY EDUCATION**

**Dr. Tobin S. Thompson**

*Brackett Endowed Chair of Reading*  
*Director Cappi Wadley Reading & Tech Ctr*  
 Bagley Hall 229  
 (918) 444-3710  
 thompsto@nsuok.edu



**Teaching** → 25 years

**At NSU** → 10 years

**EDUCATION**

- \* B.A. English Education, *NSU*
- \* M.S. College Teaching, *NSU*
- \* Ph.D. Education, *OSU*

**Personal hobbies & interests**

I have five dogs (Duke, Radley, Harper, Atticus, and Truman--can you tell I didn't get to name Duke?) who are my life. I love to read; I enjoy bowling; and I love working with schools.

**Favorite course to teach**

I've recently created a dyslexia and struggling readers course that I LOVE. Our future teachers need to know how to screen students for reading issues and what to do when students struggle. I love watching the lightbulb come on for students in that class.

**Who had the biggest impact on your educational experience?**

I've had a lot of phenomenal teachers in my life, and I've had some who really made me question why they were in the profession. Mrs. Webb, Mrs. Lee, Mrs. Langston, and Mrs. Hayes in elementary school; Mrs. Sublett, Mrs. Carey, Mr. Evers, Mr. Ross, Mr. Jayne, and Mrs. Wilson in junior high and high school; Dr. Faulds, Dr. Winn, Dr. Crow-Mann, Dr. Munsell at NSU; Dr. Parsons, Dr. Otto, and Dr. Gunzenhauser at OSU...

**What drew you to your field?**

Ha! I wanted to be a physical therapist when I grew up, but a semester at NSU in the pre-physical therapy program that ended in a .09-something GPA caused me to reconsider. I had had Dr. Faulds for a composition class, and he was so passionate about the literature that it drew me in.

**Advice for students**

Find what makes you curious, and go from there. I share with students the Make a Difference video with the character Teddy Stoddard. It's about how one teacher can change the life of a student. I also share all of Peter Reynolds' children's books with my students. The Dot, -Ish, and Sky Color are all about how it's not important to be perfect; what's important is that you give it your all.



**Field Expertise / Research Interests**

Reading  
 Dyslexia  
 Graphic Novels  
 Writing



**PSYCHOLOGY & COUNSELING**

**Dr. YungFei Kao**

*Professor*  
 Broken Arrow Education 255  
 (918) 449-6593  
 kao@nsuok.edu



**Teaching** → 30 years

**At NSU** → 30 years

**EDUCATION**

- \* Ph.D. Cognitive Psychology/Experimental Psychology, *University of Nevada, Reno*

**Personal hobbies & interests**

Oil painting is the most enjoyable thing for me to do besides being a Professor.

**What drew you to your field?**

How people think and how people perceive? How information is processed in the Brain? How human beings longing for happiness but can't wait a second to be in dismay? Is HAPPINESS created or is it just good fortune to some? What is the real treasure in humanity? What is humanity? ... I would like to know the answers to these questions and that's what drew me to Psychology.

**Favorite course to teach**

I have several favorites: Psychological Statistics, Experimental Psychology, Cognitive Psychology, History and Systems of Psychology, and Personality Theories Why? I genuinely like what I do; going to Campus is like "happy hours" to me!

**Who had the biggest impact on your educational experience?**

My Father who was a College Professor seemed to have the biggest impact.

**What do you tell students who don't know what to do with their major?**

Answer "Who I am" first. Knowing yourself will be very helpful to this question.

**Advice for students**

"Go to your class and do your work."



**Field Expertise / Research Interests**

Human Cognition and Memory  
 Psychology of Happiness

**Educational Leadership**

**Dr. Jim Ferrell**

*Associate Professor*  
 Bagley Hall 123A  
 (918) 444-3722  
 ferrellj@nsuok.edu



**Teaching** → 26 years

**At NSU** → 8 years

**EDUCATION**

- \* B.A. History, *Oklahoma City University*
- \* M.A. History, *University of Central Oklahoma*
- \* Ed.D., *Oklahoma State University*

**Personal hobbies & interests**

Baseball (Tulsa Drillers), painting (watercolor), and reading.

**What drew you to your field?**

Giving all students an opportunity to be able to make the life choices they want.

**Favorite course to teach**

School Law - I wanted to be a lawyer when I was in high school, but chose to go the doctorate route when I had the choice to make. This class has always been an interest and touches on so many different aspects of being a student, teacher, and administrator.

**Who had the biggest impact on your educational experience?**

My high school superintendent. He encouraged me to see the recruiter from Oklahoma City University when I was a senior. I had no clue about college and that simple decision changed the course of my life.

**Advice for students**

Follow your passion! Do not think you have to know it all when you finish. You will learn in your career what is important and build on what you learn in college. Don't be afraid to say, "I don't know."

**Tips on How to Connect with Professors**

- ✓ **Introduce yourself** → Whether it's after class or via email, introducing yourself is a great first step to connecting with professors.
- ✓ **Attend their office hours** → It may seem intimidating to stop by a professor's office, but office hours are the time they set aside specifically for students to visit with them outside of class. Office hours are posted on their doors, in syllabi, or you can request via email.
- ✓ **Go to class** → **Always be prepared** → **Participate** → **Display respect**
- ✓ **Get involved** → Ask your professors about any organization/honor societies to join. Professors often sponsor these, so it is another great way to get more connected to them.
- ✓ **Ask them questions** → How did they get into their field? Were they ever lost college students? What can you do with your major? What can you do to prepare for life after graduation? The sky is the limit!

**NSU Resources**

**College of Education**

- [Education Department](#)
- [Psychology & Counseling Department](#)
- [Health & Kinesiology Department](#)
- [Academic Advisors](#)

**Career Services**

- [Career & Major Advice](#)
- [What can I do with a major in...?](#)

**Student Resources**

- [MY NSU](#)
- [goNSU](#)
- [Degree Audit](#)

**Other Resources**

**YouTube**

- [Top Mistakes Students Make - Not Visiting your Professor During Office Hours](#)
- [How to get to know your Professors better!](#)
- [How faculty mentors can help first-generation students succeed](#)
- [Developing Professor Relationships](#)

**Articles**

- [The Importance of Building Relationships with your Professors](#)
- [Guide to Communicating with Professors](#)
- [How to Build a Strong Relationship with your Professor](#)

[Are you a faculty mentor that would like to be featured? Submit your info here!](#)