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A STUDY OF THE GUIDANCE METHODS USED BY WINGATE COLLEGE \0 \0 \N\
IN ATTEMPTING TO DIAGNOSE AND CORRECT UNDERACHIEVEMENT
AMONG SUPERIOR STUDENTS

## A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Department of Education

Appalachian State Teachers College

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Eleanor Sloop Cashion
August 1960

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# A STUDY OF THE GUIDANCE METHODS USED BY WINGATE COLLEGE IN ATTEMPTING TO DIAGNOSE AND CORRECT UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG SUPERIOR STUDENTS

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#### THESIS ABSTRACT

Statement of the problem. It was the purpose of this study to examine the guidance and personnel program of Wingate College and to determine to what extent that program was successful in the diagnosis and subsequent correction of underachievement among superior students in attendance there.

Methods and procedures employed in gathering the data. The data were collected from the students' files containing their personal records in the office of the Director of Student Affairs and Guidance, from those files containing their academic records in the office of the Registrar, and from consultation with members of the college staff responsible for such records.

Mental Ability Test, Garma FM of the 279 regular, or full-time, sophomore students were used as a basis for dividing the group and ascertaining which of the students could be used for the study. Two groups of twenty each were selected for their achievement or underachievement. These two groups were used for comparison in the areas of measured ability, personality factors, interests, and in individual differences.

The special, part-time and night school students were excluded from the study.

Scores on the American Council on Education Psychological Test for College Freshmen, designed for the purpose of measuring aptitude for college study, were used to determine what reasonable success could be expected of these students.

Other materials used were the scores on the California Test of Personality, Form AA; Kuder Preference Record, Vocational, Form CN; Sequential Tests of Educational Progress; personal information sheets; recorded grades, and any other information found in the folders of those students which the investigator felt would be helpful in making a more representative report.

Summary of the findings. The combined data assembled in the study by the investigator revealed that there has been identification of underachievers at Wingate College, who have been recognized and diagnosed as such through the guidance program; and that those underachievers have been counseled in an effort to help them reach their potentials. However, there has been wide variation in the employment of the various counseling services offered by Wingate College to the students by those responsible for their guidance.

The records revealed fifty-one of the students to be superior, based on Intelligence Quotients of 120 or more found on the Otis Quick-Scoring Mental Ability Test, Gamma FM. A scatter diagram of these Intelligence Quotients and the grade point averages revealed twenty of the superior students

to be underachievers; the remainder of the students were considered achievers. Overachievers were not considered in the study.

The twenty underachievers were compared with twenty of the achievers in Intelligence Quotient, scores on the achievement tests, grade point averages, other test percentile ranks and personal information gathered from the files of the individual students.

In this study, it was revealed that 40 per cent of the students classified as underachievers were encouraged sufficiently through the guidance program to raise their grade point average in the sophomore year over that of the freshman year. No improvement was made by 5 per cent of the students. Fifty-five per cent of the students actually achieved on a level in the sophomore year lower than that of the freshman year.

This would indicate that the use of the guidance methods in this area of underachievement has been limited and therefore, only moderately successful. In the light of this conclusion, recommendations were made by the investigator for the consideration of the college administration and faculty. These recommendations are:

1. A study committee composed of five carefully selected members of the faculty and administration should

be designated for the purposes of (a) formulating an adequate and workable philosophy of the guidance program in terms of underachievement among superior students, (b) interpreting that philosophy to the faculty in order to insure fullest cooperation, (c) evaluating the tools and techniques to be used in the guidance of the underachievers, and (d) making recommendations as the need arises.

- 2. A study should be made of the freshman students by the guidance department at the end of the first quarter of work to determine which of the students can be considered superior and which of the superior students can be classified as underachievers.
- 3. These students should be re-assigned to advisors especially qualified, who would consider each case and make case studies for diagnostic purposes, utilizing all the tools and techniques available.
- 4. These special advisors should work closely with the director of guidance services for the college in individual conferences with those underachievers among superior students for the purpose of determining causes of the underachievement and proposing a possible plan for its correction.
- 5. At the end of the school year, preferably at the final faculty meeting, an evaluation of the committee's work should be presented for discussion and proposals for the future.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Grateful acknowledgement is made of the kindly guidance of Mr. Paul Bagley, Dr. Lee F. Reynolds, and Dr. Clarence C. Carder, members of the Thesis Committee, who were of valuable help in completing this study.

Encouragement by each member of the Personnel Staff of Appalachian State Teachers College has been greatly appreciated.

Further acknowledgement is due Dr. Budd E. Smith, Mr. Ralph Williams, Mr. S. G. Chappell and members of their staff who cooperated so generously with the personnel and academic records of Wingate College.

Last but by no means least, acknowledgement is made of the unselfish cooperation of my beloved husband and delightful children without which this venture would have been impossible.

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# CHAPTER I

#### INTRODUCTION

Due to forces both within and without educational circles, special emphasis during the last few years has been on the various attempts of educational institutions to identify the student of superior ability and to help that student to reach his potential. This has been a felt need, not only for the individual's enhancement through the personal satisfaction of accomplishment but also for the betterment of the human race and, more recently, for its actual survival in this ever-changing world. The frantic frustration of the American public when confronted with the possibility of taking second place to Russia in scientific accomplishment has given a boost to theories long held by leading educators that national talent must not be wasted through inadequate identification of the academically talented.

Assistance for the student can be meaningful only when the individual's potential is first examined and recognized for its special qualities, and then interpreted

John M. Stalnaker, "Methods of Identification-the Complexity of the Problem," The Identification and Education of the Academically Talented Student in the American Secondary School; Conference Report, February, 1958. James E. Conant, Chairman. (Washington, D. C., National Education Association, 1958) p. 18.

to the student. Tragic is the plight of that student who has the ability but does not have the confidence, motivation or will to reach his level of achievement; more tragic is the educational institution that does not exhibit and utilize its ability to diagnose such a situation and attempt through every means available to do something about it.

Most educators feel that the logical and most practical place for interpretation and identification in the college program is in the Personnel and Guidance Department. Paul Witty has said, "Guidance, in the broadest and deepest sense of the term, is essential for adequate development of the academically talented student."

It is in agreement with this understanding of the purposes of the guidance program that the following study was made.

#### I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It is the purpose of this study to exemine the guidance and personnel program of

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 24.

Paul Witty, "Guiding the Education of the Academically Talented Pupil in American Secondary Schools," The Identification and Education of the Academically Talented Student in the American Secondary School; Conference Report, February, 1958. James B. Conant, Chairman. (Washington, D. C., National Education Association, 1958) p. 63.

Wingate College and to determine to what extent that program is successful in the diagnosis and subsequent correction of underachievement among superior students in attendance there.

Importance of the study. It is felt that the greatest resource available to man is the undeveloped potential of the human mind. If a democratic society is to continue in existence, there must be an intellectual awakening and an additional impetus given to the increasing achievements of man through his own creative and leadership abilities. It is believed that the student in his first or second year of higher education begins to identify himself with adult society and his responsibility in it. It is further believed that if the situation of the underachiever can be recognized, the causes determined, and a recommended procedure for correction be accomplished during these first two years of college, perhaps the educational institution of higher learning will have reached a level of maturity never before attained.

Wingate College has always been proud of its sound educational program which has emphasized the value of the accomplishment of the individual. A prevailing desire to consistently improve and expand its program to fit the individual needs of the student as well as the collective

<sup>4</sup>Stalnaker, op. cit., p.20.

needs of the entire student body has prompted the administration of Wingate College to approve this study.

# II. DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

Guidance methods. The term guidance methods is interpreted as meaning any consciously undertaken activities, or use of any tools and techniques on an individual or group level which influence a student in making plans for his future, and which afford those responsible for his guidance insight into the nature of the individual, facilitating their efforts to help him formulate those plans. Success of some of these activities must be measured in the intengibles, such as influence and inspiration; success of most of them, however, can be measured in tangibles, such as the test batteries, personal and academic records, case studies, and other devices used in individual cases for specific diagnosis and correction. These are the activities to be examined for their worthy contributions to the total program.

Measured ability. Measured ability refers to the scored ability of the student found on proven tests which have been given consistently to Wingate College students.

Underachievement. Underachievement is the term used to identify the level attained by the student in academic

work which is considered to be below the level of his measured ability exhibited through the testing program at Wingate College.

Achievement. Achievement is the term used to identify the level attained by the student in academic work which is considered to be more nearly related to his measured ability exhibited through the testing program at Wingate College.

Superior students. The term superior students in this study refers to those students who, through measured ability, have indicated an Intelligence Quotient of 120 or higher, based on the scores of the Otis Quick-Scoring Mental Ability Test, Gamma FM.

## III. MATERIALS USED AND GROUP STUDIED

Mental Ability Test, Gamma FM found in the files of the 279 regular, or full-time, sophomore students were used as a basis for dividing the group and ascertaining which of the students could be used for the study. Two groups of twenty each were selected for their achievement or underachievement. These two groups were used for comparison in the areas of personality factors, interests and individual differences.

The special, part-time and night school students were excluded from the study.

Scores on the American Council on Education Psychological Test for College Freshmen, designed for the purpose of measuring aptitude for college study, were used to determine what reasonable success could be expected of these students.

Other materials used were the scores on the California
Test of Personality, Form AA; Kuder Preference Record,
Vocational, Form CH; Sequential Tests of Educational Progress;
personal information sheets; recorded grades, and any other
information found in the folders of those students which the
investigator felt would be helpful in making a more representative report.

Consultation with persons responsible for these records and their interpretations were held and any information pertinent to the study was taken into consideration.

## IV. ORGANIZATION OF INFORMATION

The information was collected from the students' files containing their personal records in the office of the Director of Student Affairs and Guidance, from those files containing their academic records in the office of the Registrar, and from consultation with members of the college staff responsible for such records.

This information was examined first for the purpose of ascertaining which of these students were to be considered superior.

The students selected were then coded and tables were set up compiling their class interval and frequency in Intelligence Quotient.

Grade point averages of the superior students were tabulated and the percentages recorded for each range.

A scatter diagram of the grade point averages and the class intervals of Intelligence Quotient aided in the selection of underachievers among the superior students who were to be used in the study for comparison with a like number of superior students who were classified achievers.

Intelligence Quotient ranks of the students selected for the study were tabulated and the frequencies of the achievers and underachievers were recorded.

Percentile ranks of both achievers and underachievers on the American Council on Education Psychological Test for College Freshmen were tabulated, and the frequencies with their percentages were recorded.

Other devices used for diagnosis were the results of the California Test of Personality; the Kuder Preference Record, Vecational, Form CH; and any personal information referring to a history of personal or family mental illness, a physical disability, or any emotional disturbances which might affect achievement.

Comparisons were also made of the Sequential Tests of Educational Progress ranks with the grade point averages of superior students classified as underachievers and achievers.

# V. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

In a study of this kind, where the investigator uses recorded data almost exclusively instead of personal interviews with those investigated, there is a large margin of error. However, it is the purpose of this study to examine the guidance methods now used at Wingate College and to determine to what extent they are meeting the challenge of modern education with respect to the superior students in attendance there.

Due to the varied concepts of the guidance program held by members of the administration and faculty, as interpreted by the investigator, a study of the program would be more difficult if that study were attempted on a basis other than that of personal and academic records. Furthermore, since the records of these students have formed a sound basis for recommendation for either further college education or for occupations, it is felt that this is probably the logical and most practical method of arriving at some sort of conclusion as to the worth of the methods used in this area.

# CHAPTER II

#### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

One of the great challenges of education in America today is the recognition of the fact that the effectiveness of American citizenry, as it attempts to operate in the framework of Democracy, depends on the ability of each of its components to measure up to full capacity in his function as a citizen.

It has been long established that the ultimate aim of the educational process is maximum growth and development for all persons. If men were as machines, the problem of education would be one of automation in converting the raw material into the finished product; but education must, of necessity, continue its application of love, understanding, appreciation and dedicated diligence in order to convert its raw materials of human capabilities into acceptable, functionally mature and useful human products. 3

Donald Russell, "A Plea to Beam In the Underachiever," High School Journal, 42:66, December 1958.

<sup>2</sup>Nellie McCaslin, "A Critical Look at Group Dynamics," School and Society, 42:169, November 26, 1955.

<sup>3</sup>Russell, op. cit., p. 67.

Literature on achievement and underachievement. The problem of the student who has the ability but does not demonstrate this ability to succeed in academic work is confronted constantly by counselors, teachers, and administrators. The demands of modern education are such that it becomes of imperative importance to those persons responsible for the guidance of student personnel that the academically talented student be identified in order to be able to help him.

An adequate definition is necessary for the proper identification of the underachiever. Everyone is, in a sense, an underachiever in that he fails to realize his full potentialities, yielding to the frailties of softness, apathy to varying types of motivation, and showing emotional discordance.4

Combining deep concern with a bit of humor, Russell has this to say:

In a very general sense, the underachiever is the person who performs markedly below his capacities to learn, to make applications of learning, and to complete tasks. Speaking figuratively, he is a person who sits on his potential, resisting various motivational procedures to get him off his potential, and possibly needing an advoitly directed kick in that same potential.

<sup>4</sup>Russell, op. cit., p. 66.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

According to Froehlich, students underachieve for widely different reasons. There is the student whose antagonistic behavior creates a personality clash with most of his teachers who might unconsciously mark him down. There is another type of student who works long hours outside of school to help the family finances. And there is always the student who lacks reading skills, or arithmetic fundamentals, or English skills for certain of his subjects. The lazy student ranks high on the teacher's list of underachievers. Then there is the student who has a better-thanaverage ability, but seems to underachieve because he does not find classroom work inspiring, due either to uninspiring methods of the teacher or because of his own driving interest in other things. And of great concern to all good teachers is the student who underachieves because he is emotionally confused or upset.

It is significant to remember that students do not deliberately underachieve without real cause, but rather they are caught up in and engulfed by a tidal wave of definite factors relative to his state. Children are not inherently lazy, indifferent, or antagonistic to life

<sup>6</sup>Clifford P. Froehlich and John G. Darley, Studying Students (Chicago: Science Research Associates, Inc., 1952), pp. 268-269.

situations. Unless burdened with abnormalities, either physical or mental, they view each new situation with an adventurous spirit. Laziness, indifference or antagonism in children and young people is usually provoked by certain aspects of school and school life, home and home life, or community life.

MacLean says that an underachiever is one whose grades are well below those expected of one of his measured ability. If he has exhibited the ability and does not reach higher than a "C" or "D" on teacher grades, he is branded an underachiever and, as such, becomes a matter of concern to all who work with him: teacher, counselor, parents and society in general.

Sensitive teachers who are acutely aware of the fact that they have underachievers and that they do have problems do not always know how to search out the underlying sources of these problems. It is in this area that the counselor can be of greatest assistance to the teacher because of the specialized techniques at his command and more time in which to employ them.

Russell, op. cit., p. 68.

Malcolm S. MacLean, "What and Why of Underschievement," High School Journal, 42:69, December, 1958.

<sup>9</sup>Froehlich, op. cit., p. 270.

Literature on measured ability and prediction of success in college. The 1920's marked the time when the science of mental test and measurement came into its own. Heretofore the progress had been very slow due to a lack of effective and adequate analysis of the data. 10

Strang says that intelligence tests, properly administered, show how a mind works under certain standard conditions. This is of definite help in the diagnosis of low college achievement of superior students. 11

Accurate though they may be in the areas used for measurement, tests do not always show a student's promise in other fields. A student's strongest intellectual powers may be latent, due either to a lack of opportunity or to emotional difficulty.

The measurement of these individual differences should be regarded as symbolic rather than clearly definitive. 12 Crawford says, "The Intelligence Quotient designates brightness rather than essential scope of knowledge; capacity for intellectual progress rather than final attainment." 13

<sup>10</sup>Albert Beecher Crawford, Forecasting College Achievement: A Survey of Aptitude Tests for Higher Education (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1946), p. 1.

<sup>11</sup>Ruth Strang, Counseling Technics in College and Secondary School (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949), p. 22.

<sup>12</sup>crawford, op. cit., p. 11.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

Results of intelligence tests seem to be related to college success apart from courses taken previously, according to Davis. In one study made, it was found that students who had had four years of Latin preparatory to college did no better than students of equal intelligence who had had no Latin previously.

The part intelligence plays in probable success in college should be considered by the guidance leader advising students coming for help. If it is used by itself, the information may lead to wrong conclusions; but it, when used in conjunction with a well-rounded stock of details about the advisee, is an important consideration. 15

Recognition of significant or individual variations and their practical use for guidance and counseling purposes is essential in interpreting tests of any kind. 16

Literature on identification and correction of underachievement. In the identification of the underachiever, discrepancies between measured academic intelligence and performance in terms of grades is the simplest. There are a variety of other factors, according to MacLean, that have

<sup>14</sup>Frank S. Davis, Editor, Pupil Personnel Services (Seranton: International Testbook Company, 1948), p. 59.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 65.

<sup>16</sup> Crawford, op. cit., p. 5.

a dramatic if undesirable effect upon student achievement; they are related directly to the pupil's physical and psychic energy levels. These are malnutrition, poor sleep habits, emotional distress relative to sexual maturity and diseases ranging all the way from colds and viruses to diabetes and heart condition. 17

The interests of a student play a large part in the identification of the underachiever. MacLean states that:

Research over a forty-year period by E. K. Strong, M. E. Hahn, J. G. Darley, Frederick Kuder and their associates and students has established beyond cavil that (1) interests are becoming patterned and canalized in high school years and change very little during the rest of life; (2) interests have a low correlation with abilities; (3) when interest and ability are both high, achievement and satisfaction with achievement are almost certain; (4) interests which are lacking or low in intensity can rarely, if ever, be developed by forcing, demanding, or punishing. It is clear that an essential element in the identification of the underachiever is the measurement of his interests. 18

The values a student has established through home, church, school and society undergird his behavior, impelling him to achieve, underachieve, or even in some cases to overachieve.

Students pour their energies into that which they value most. Some are bent upon a search for truth through

<sup>17</sup> MacLean, loc. cit.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, p. 70.

science or mathematics; some have a fine passion for art or music, believing that beauty is truth; others concentrate on practical matters of money and materials; still others focus their energies on warm human relations in social service.

The pressures of outside interests influence the underachiever. The frequent complaint of over-scheduling needs to be examined in the light of the limits to the student's time and energies, and a more judicious choice of extracurricular activities be encouraged. 19

In handling the problem of underachievement, the logical place for the use and interpretation of data is the guidance and counseling department. Student personnel work has grown from small beginnings to a place of importance in the educational program of American colleges and universities. Trained personnel now in many situations devote all of their time to helping students with their problems, whether they be academic, social or otherwise.

The philosophy of student personnel work emphasizes the necessary responsibility of the institution to consider the development of the student as a whole person. 20 Through

<sup>19</sup>Norbert E. Koopman, "Some Causes of Underachievement," <u>High School Journal</u>, 42:71.

of College Students (American Council on Education Series, April, 1939). p. iii.

proper guidance, students must be made aware of their needs. They should be made aware of the common causes of low achievement which, according to Johnson, are lack of ability, lack of opportunity, attitude and basic psychological problems. 21

There are common problems which can be handled in groups, but many of them must be handled individually. Group participation in multiple counseling has been helpful in dissolving egotistical attitudes in favor of more altruistic ones. 22

Group participation in orientation or advisory situations is helpful in correcting misconceptions among young people. When they learn that job opportunities and promotions are dependent sometimes upon factors unrelated to academic achievement, they may adopt the "what's the use?" attitude. Or perhaps the prospect of military duty or the staggering anxiety about world annihilation tend to discourage or postpone achievement.

Our economic way of life with its deplorable emphasis upon possessions, conveniences and pleasures may help the

G. Orville Johnson, "The Problem of the Low Achiever,"

High School Journal, 42:73, December 1958.

Small Group Discussions (Madison, Wisconsin: Monona Publications, 1958), p. 24.

student to abandon formal education in order to earn the money necessary to obtain them.

As a student becomes aware of corruption in government and a lack of statesman-like leadership, he may feel that he can probably buy his way through life or that success depends upon knowing the "right" people. 23

counseling is a gradual process. In helping the student tolunderstand himself, great patience must be exercised, along with judicious use of all of the guidance methods available to the counselor. In addition to the group methods used in the orientation and advisory programs, there must follow the individual counseling which is a natural outgrowth of the group situation. The interview, the autobiography and the projective techniques all join with the group methods in helping the counselor to gain insight into the nature of the individual needing counsel.<sup>24</sup>

The solution to these problems requires a philosophy of providing equal opportunities rather than identical ones for all children and a knowledge of the factors that cause low achievement. In an ideal situation, the curriculum is evaluated in terms of needs, characteristics and potential of each child.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>23</sup>Koopman, op. cit., pp. 88-90.

<sup>24</sup>strang, op. cit., pp. 16-149

<sup>25</sup> Johnson, loc. cit.

Literature on methods used in similar institutions.

The identification, causes and possible means of correcting underachievement among college students does not differ basically from underachievement smong other groups.

Screening devices, however, have enabled colleges to be more selective in their personnel, and careful guidance after enrollment has helped in the diagnosis of such underachievement as well as in the correction of it.

A few decades ago there was nothing for the college student but "liberal arts." Earliest guidance in colleges was for women since they were taking their places in the working world formerly occupied solely by men.

work of the guidance program in the junior colleges as well as the senior colleges has been largely vocational. In 1926, the functions of the college personnel work were selection and matriculation of students, personnel service, curriculum and teaching, research and coordination of various agencies concerned with work with individuals. 26

There is certainly no one best program. In small colleges, there is less formality about the program due to the close relationship between students and faculty. 27

<sup>26</sup> John R. Emerest and others, Student Personnel Services, (Washington: Subcommittee of Committee on Studies and Standards of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1949), p. 23.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 37.

There is recognition in colleges that the American college student of today is different from the student of yesterday. Student personnel services no longer are considered extra, but they are a definite part of the student's total education. 28

In 1948, Bookman made a survey of small colleges in which he listed tests administered in the guidance program. Most frequently used were the American Council on Education Psychological Test for Freshmen, reading and English tests, and personality tests. These were used extensively in the orientation programs of the colleges in the study.<sup>29</sup>

In 1958, Raines made a study of the tools and techniques used by small schools in the South for the purpose of diagnosing the emotionally disturbed. She found that the smaller schools employed more extensive use of tools and techniques for freshman students. The study indicated that of twenty-four schools having enrollments of 650 or less that in addition to personal data questionnaire, auto-biography and personal inventory that personal interviews were required of all freshmen, conducted by the personnel staff of the guidance department in each school. It was

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 70.

also found that smaller schools went further than this by writing case studies for students in need of special help. 30

Summary. In investigating the area of underachievement, it was concluded that there is no level of intellectual ability that is without its share of underachievers. The level of the gifted child, however, is the most fertile ground in which underachievement can and usually does develop.

The literature was in agreement that a further look must be taken at the complexities of life in work and play at home, in school, and in the cultures in which students grow. The hourly demands upon students is kaleidoscopic, and the guidance programs of colleges must face up to the needs of these students in order to help them reach their potentials.

ment as to the necessity of identification of the academically talented student who is not achieving at an acceptable level.

More and more colleges are becoming aware of their responsibilities with respect to their superior students, and they are employing all of the methods of their guidance departments, in varying degree, in attempts to correct the known underachievement among these superior students.

<sup>30</sup> Betty Lou Raines, "A Survey of the Tools and Techniques Used by Colleges and Universities of the Southern Region to Identify the Emotionally Handicapped Students" (unpublished Master's thesis, Appalachian State Teachers College, 1949), p. 93.

# CHAPTER III

# ANALYSIS OF METHODS USED AND RESULTS

The methods used for identification, a study of the possible causes, and the guidance methods for encouraging correction of underachievement among superior students were examined and the degree of their success, shown through improvement or lack of it, were evaluated.

# I. METHODS USED FOR IDENTIFICATION

Within the limits of the study it was recognized that identification of the superior students among the sophomores was a primary factor by which the value of the study could be determined.

Mental Ability Test, Gamma FM were plotted and it was found that in the sophomore group of 279 students 51 or 18 per cent were in the superior group with an Intelligence Quotient of 120 to 132; 75 per cent of the students had Intelligence Quotients ranging from 90 to 119; approximately six per cent of the students had Intelligence Quotients below 90. The classifications were made on Table I after reviewing two results of the same form of the Otis test, one given at the beginning of the freshman year and one

TABLE I

INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENTS OF SOPHOMORES

Intel Quo		gence ent	Frequen <b>cy</b>	Percentage of group
130	-	139	6	2.1
120	-	129	45	16.1
110	-	119	80	28.7
100	-	109	86	30.8
90	-	99	44	15.8
80	-	89	10	3.6
70	-	79	1	.4
No s	<b>c</b> o:	res	7	2.5
	w.p. <del>.</del>	Totals	279	100.0

given at the beginning of the sophomore year. The higher of the two quotients was used.

The class intervals of the superior students was then tabulated, giving a twelve-step range. The largest frequency shown in Table II was found in the third interval, representing approximately 17 per cent of the group studied. The percentages of the frequencies ranged from 17 per cent down to approximately two per cent of the group in the twelfth interval.

ability. Another primary factor in determining the value of the study was the adequate identification of the underachievers among the superior students now classified.

Those not found to be underachievers were designated as achievers. Overachievers were not used in the study.

Inasmuch as grades and equivalent grade points earned at Wingate College are used as a basis for determining academic success there, this basis was used by the investigator for identification of the underachiever. The grades earned were given the following value for each semester hour successfully completed: A - 4, B - 3, C - 2, and D - 1.

The point equivalents of the students grades were averaged and compiled. Approximately one third of the group

TABLE II

CLASS INTERVAL AND FREQUENCY OF SUPERIOR STUDENTS

ON OTIS MENTAL ABILITY TEST, GAMMA FM

Otis IQ Rank	Class Interval	Frequency	Percentage of Superior Group
132	12	1	1.96
131	11	2	3.92
130	10	3	5.88
129	9	7	13.73
128	8	3	5.88
127	No. Gara	Scripture.	School Sections
126	7	3	5.88
125	6	3	5.88
124	5	5	9.80
123	4	2	3.92
122	3	9	17.65
121	2	7	13.73
120	1.	6	11.77

averaged 3 points or above for each hour of work; 27 per cent of the students averages 2.5 to 3 points; and 39 per cent of the students averaged below 2.5 points. These figures are found on Table III.

Intelligence Quotients and grade point averages were arranged in a scatter diagram to determine which of the students in the superior group could be classified as achievers and which classified as underachievers, according to their measured ability. The arrangement on this diagram is shown on Table IV, page 28. For purposes of comparison, 20 of the students classified as underachievers were selected and 20 of the whole group classified as achievers were selected.

The Intelligence Quotients of both achievers and underachievers were ranked and the frequencies examined. It was noted that in Table V, page 29, that there was a larger percentage of students among the underachievers in the higher range of Intelligence Quotients. This would seem to indicate either (1) that there was a latent potential within these students which the educational institution had not been able to develop, or (2) that there were many other factors involved in the development of an individual student which should be given value equivalent to that of academic achievement. Whether the reasons are

TABLE III

GRADE POINT AVERAGES OF SUPERIOR STUDENTS

cint average n academic subjects	Frequency	Percentage
3 or above	17	33.3
2.5 - 3	14	27.4
Below 2.5	20	39•3
Totals	51	100.0

TABLE IV
SCATTER DIAGRAM FOR SELECTION OF STUDENTS FOR STUDY

Grade point averages

TABLE V

COMPARISON OF INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENTS OF

UNDERACHIEVERS AND ACHIEVERS

Intelligence Quotient Otis	Frequency Underachievers	Frequency Achievers
132		1
131	1	1
130	3	_
129	3	4
128	2	1
127	_	_
126	3	_
125	1	2
124	2	3
123	_	1
122	2	5
121	3	_
120	_	2

within the framework of the educational processes or whether they are largely within the attitudes governing each individual student is a question which could and perhaps should be explored by all institutions of higher learning.

Percentiles on psychological test. In pursuit of further indications of ability, the investigator was led to examine the percentile ranks on the American Council on Education Psychological Test for College Freshmen. As a part of the testing program directed during the orientation of first-year students by the guidance personnel of Wingate College, this test was given in an effort to determine college ability. These scores, as well as other test scores, were tabulated by the persons responsible for guidance at Wingate College, and they were distributed to all faculty members.

On Table VI, the scores of the twenty underachievers in the group of superior students were scaled according to percentile rank and compared with the scores of the twenty students classified as achievers. It was found that 30 per cent of the underachievers fell below the fiftieth percentile rank on the psychological test, while only 20 per cent of the achievers fell below this rank. Fifty per cent of the underachievers ranged from the fiftieth to the seventy-fifth percentile, while only 25 per cent of the achievers fell in

PERCENTILE RANKS OF UNDERACHIEVERS AND ACHIEVERS
ON AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION PSYCHOLOGICAL
TEST FOR COLLEGE FRESHMEN

Percentile Rank		
95 - 99 90 - 94 85 - 89 80 - 84	1	4 2 1 1 2
85 - 89		ĩ
80 - 84	2	ī
75 - 79	<del>-</del>	2
70 <b>-</b> 74 65 <b>-</b> 69	2	2
65 - 69	2 1 4 2 1	1 1
60 <b>-</b> 64 55 <b>-</b> 59	2	•
50 - 54	ĩ	I
45 - 49	3	1 2
40 - 44	-	2
45 - 49 40 - 44 35 - 39 30 - 34 25 - 29	ī	-
25 - 29	T	-
		_
Below 25	1	1

this catagory. In the range from the seventy-fifth percentile to the ninety-ninth percentile, only 20 per cent of the underachievers were recorded, but 50 per cent of the achievers fell in this range. It should be noted at this time that one of the students classified as an achiever was not given this test for reasons unknown to the investigator.

Inasmuch as this test was designed to measure college ability, it was of interest to the investigator that the highest percentile rank contained a student classified as an underachiever. This would seem to indicate that mere mental aptitude for college study does not necessarily mean that it will follow that the student will achieve college success.

Percentile ranks on personality test. Proceding on the assumption that many more factors other than academic status through grades earned have a direct bearing upon an individual student's achievement orlunderachievement, the investigator explored further into the various guidance methods used by Wingate College in this area of student potential. In order to help students to understand themselves in their relation to society, the California Test of Personality, Form AA was given to students entering Wingate College. This test and others given during the orientation program of Wingate College were designed to

help both faculty and students in recognizing any lack of adjustment, academically or socially.

The percentile ranks on the California Test of
Personality of the twenty underachievers in the study were
recorded and a comparison of their ranks was made with the
percentile ranks of the twenty achievers. It was interesting
to note on Table VII that the same percentage of achievers
fell below the fiftieth percentile as did underachievers.
Above the fiftieth percentile, there was only one more student
in the group of achievers than in the group of underachievers.
However, there were twice as many achievers as underachievers
who ranked higher than the ninety-fifth percentile. Seven
of the students, four of whom were classified as underachievers and three of whom were classified as achievers,
had not been given the test due to late entrance or transfer
from another school.

The records of the students ranking in the twentieth percentile were studied for possible detection of emotional maladjustment. Neither showed a record of physical or emotional disturbances. The student classified as an underachiever was admired by his fellows and was active in the athletic program. He apparently came from a healthy home situation with advantages superior to most of his fellow students. He was well read and wrote creatively.

TABLE VII

PERCENTILE RANKS ON CALIFORNIA TEST OF PERSONALITY

Percentile Rank	Frequency Underachievers	Frequency Achievers
99		1
98	_	1
95	2	2
90	2	1
80	2	3
70	3	2
60	3	1
50	1	3
40	2	1
30	_	1
20	1	1
Not tested	4	3

An unusual power of concentration caused him to appear aloof to some of his peers although he was well liked by those who knew him. The student classified as an achiever was only moderately active in student activities, was a hard-working student, and was moderately well liked by his peers.

The findings of the investigator in examination of personality traits of the underachievers as compared with those of the achievers would seem to indicate that individual differences vary in degrees not necessarily related to success in academic work. The tests have been valuable, however, in enabling a more comprehensive study of the individual student.

Indications on interest inventory. Often a student does not have a keen interest in achieving on an academic level, while he may have a definite interest in the arts or other fields. In order to help him decide just where his interests are concentrated and how he can best develop them, an interest inventory is frequently recommended.

At Wingate College, in the group meetings which the students had with their advisors each week during the year, the Kuder Preference Record, Vocational, was administered. It was recommended that each student make his own profile of the test scores under supervision. Then that profile was interpreted to him either in the group meeting or in

private conference. This has been most helpful in plotting courses of study both at Wingate College and for further study at a senior college. In some cases it was helpful in explaining to a student that he should not pursue a line of study unsuited to his preferential interest if other criteria for such interpretation showed unsuitability. Caution was taken to guide the student into a suitable choice of his own selection.

Table VIII shows a break-down of the interest areas, both high and low, of the two groups of superior students. Of the underachievers, more showed high interest in the areas of the scientific, musical, and social service than did the achievers. Of the achievers, more students showed high interest in the areas of the outdoors, mechanical, computational, artistic, literary, and clerical. For reasons unknown to the investigator six of the underachievers and five of the achievers were not given the Kuder Preference Record, Vocational.

The interests of the students here recorded do not give any substantial conclusion as to the relation of the interests of the underachievers to their failure to so achieve in their academic work at Wingate College. The recorded interests do indicate that perhaps more diligent guidance of students classified as underachievers could

TABLE VIII

INTEREST PREFERENCES OF ACHIEVERS AND UNDERACHIEVERS

Interest Preferences	Freq Under	Frequency Achievers		
	High	Low	High	Low
Outdoor	3	5	4	1
Mechanical	2	3	8	1
Computational	1	2	4	4
Scientific	5	1	4	1
Persuasive	6	2	4	6
Artistic	5	2	7	2
Literary	3	4	4	6
Musical	4	7	_	5
Social Service	6	3	4	2
Clerical		4	1	3

have been given by those responsible. The fact that 25 per cent of the underachievers showed a definite interest in the field of science would indicate that perhaps they had not been challenged to explore that area of college work, or that they had not accepted the challenge to do so.

Comparison of measured ability with Sequential Tests of Educational Progress. For purposes of evaluating the teaching program as well as to ascertain how boys and girls at Wingate College compare with students over the nation, the Sequential Tests of Educational Progress were given during the second semester of the sophomore year. The scores on these tests were computed and the local students ranked on each separate test. National norms were used for comparison with students nationally, but rank was scaled locally.

The scores of the students classified as achievers ranked slightly higher on the whole than the students classified as underachievers. However, examination of Tables IX and X, pages 39 and 40 respectively, reveals an average rank of the underachievers to be 48, their average grade point to be 2.1, and their average Intelligence Quotient to be 126; the average rank of the achievers was 37 with a grade point average of 3.2 and an average Intelligence Quotient of 125. This would seem to indicate that their performance on the whole on this national college ability

TABLE IX

COMPARISON OF SEQUENTIAL TESTS OF EDUCATIONAL

PROGRESS RANKS WITH GRADE POINT AVERAGES AND

INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENTS OF UNDERACHIEVERS

Student Code	Local Rank S T E P	Grade Point Average	Intelligence Quotient
B-7	3 6 9	1.5	129
M-2 M-4	0	2.6	130
L-3	10	2.4	129 12 <b>9</b>
w-1	15	2.4	130
S-3	23.5	1.9	130
S-1	29	1.8	128
B-8	30	2.6	126
R-2	40.5	2	122
D-1	43	2.4	126
W-2	44.5	2.7	128
B-6	50	2	124
F-1	54.5	1.6	131
D-2	59	1.5	121
G-2	63.5	1.9	121
L-2	90.5	2.2	126
B-1	104	1.3	122
L-1	115.5		125
M-3	126.5	2.1	121
H-2	No scores	2	124
Averages	48	2.1	126

TABLE X

COMPARISON OF SEQUENTIAL TESTS OF EDUCATIONAL

PROGRESS RANKS WITH GRADE POINT AVERAGES AND

INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENTS OF ACHIEVERS

Student Code	Local Rank S T E P	Grade Point Average	Intelligence Quotient
T-1	1	3.2 3.5 3.3 3.6	129
C-1	1 4 5 7 8	3.5	129
F-4	5	3	124
H-1	7	3.3	129
A-2	8	3.6	125
W-3	15	2.9 3.7 3.8 3.2 2.7	122
M-1	19	3.7	131
H-4	20	3.8	132
F-3	22	3.2	122
S-2	23.5	2.7	124
A-1	28	3.2 2.9 2.9 3.3 3.4	122
W-4	36.5 48	2.9	124
B-5	48	2.9	125
B-4	54.5	3.3	123
T-2	59	3.4	122
B-2	90.5	2.9	120
B-9	107	3	120
R-1	122	3.2 3.5 3.2	122
G-1	No scores	3.5	129
N-1	No scores	3.2	125
Averages	37	3.2	125

test is in line with their achievement at Wingate College. However, on an individual basis, the performances varied considerably.

# II. METHODS USED TO DETERMINE CAUSES

The methods used by Wingate College in determining causes of underachievement among superior students were similar to the methods used for identification of underachievers among all students at Wingate, and they were varied. Small group conferences, individual conferences, group and individual testing situations, the use of sociometric devices and the gathering of personal information through records, dormitory counselors, close friends and other reliable parties all helped to bring the administration into close contact with the students and enabled them to determine in most cases the cause or causes of underachievement. A large part of the responsibility for compiling and interpreting these data was handled through the personnel and guidance office.

Group conferences. There were several opportunities for group guidance on the campus of Wingate College. The orientation program for freshmen the week before registration in the fall provided an ideal time for compiling necessary information for the students' files. It was

during this week that the testing program was carried out.

The results were compiled and any notations meriting comment were made for faculty consideration. All faculty members were given a report on the scores made on placement tests.

All students were placed in advisory groups headed by the various members of the faculty. It was in these advisory groups that study habits, social acceptance, personality, vocational and educational guidance was studied and discussed. In these group situations many students were more willing to talk out their problems than they were in individual situations. Often, too, the advisor recognized a student's need of individual counseling resulting from these meetings.

All teachers, but more particularly those of English, sociology and psychology, utilized every opportunity in class assignments and discussions to add to their knowledge and understanding of the individual students. The autobiographies and the themes handed to the English teacher were revealing. The additional tests and discussions of personality and inter-personal relations afforded insight for the psychology teacher. The concept of social structure displayed to the teacher of sociology and related subjects disclosed attitudes necessary to the understanding of the students.

Individual conferences. As previously stated, there usually arose from the group conferences indications of the need for individual conferences with students by the advisor, teacher or guidance counselor. These individual conferences were most often initiated by the students themselves, but in some cases, the students had to be prodded along by either their advisors or some other interested persons.

Conferences with advisors. Advisors on their toes and keenly interested in the students entrusted to their guidance were quick to recognize a peculiar problem and make an effort to have the students want to come to him for guidance toward a possible solution. Appointments were made and held as often as it was necessary. Most of these problems related to courses of study.

Conferences with teachers. Some of these problems related directly to the classroom situation; thus, the advisor either directed the student to arrange for a conference with his teacher concerned or the student, on his own initiative, made the contact. Frequently, the teacher, who also was cognizant of the fact that all was not well with the student in the classroom situation, made the initial move to set up individual conferences. The most frequent of these concerned progress in the subject to be covered and others referred to a course of study in that

teacher's field. In some cases, students who sensed a warm responsive attitude of a particular teacher went to that teacher with problems of a personal nature as well. The administration of Wingate College has always encouraged this warm relationship between faculty and students.

Conferences with director of personnel and guidance.

Personnel records of students were compiled in the office of the Director of Student Affairs who directs the guidance and counseling services at Wingate College. These records were collected through the group and individual conferences and turned in to this office by teachers and advisors. In addition, the records included test scores and other data collected during orientation week for freshmen.

The counselor was a referral source for teachers and advisors for students needing such counsel. However, the students were encouraged to avail themselves of this service freely, and they frequently did. Academic, social or emotional problems were handled on an individual basis by the counselor.

Periodically the faculty as a group was informed of scores on group testing, case studies that had been made in individual cases, and other matters in the interest of the entire college as well as the individual student. There was active participation on the part of many faculty members

in clarifying an issue or volunteering information helpful to the counselor in handling individual problems.

Additional testing on an individual basis. When it was advisable, the counselor administered individual tests to help him give the student insight into his problem. The nature of the test was determined by the nature of the problem involved, but always the emphasis was on helping the student understand himself.

In the instance of the superior student who was an underachiever, the counselor explored his record for positive and negative factors pertaining to educational, emotional, and social background and attitudes. Sometimes he was successful in helping the student if the student was sincere in wanting help. In other cases, he was not so successful due to a multiplicity of factors. In some extreme cases, students were referred for professional treatment upon conferences with the parents.

Sociometric devices and projective techniques. The sociometric devices and projective techniques used by the teachers, advisors and counselor divulged information which helped those responsible for the welfare of the student to bring about a happier relationship with the introvertive or non-acceptable personality from a social standpoint. Extreme discomfort felt by the students who were left out of the

major portion of the college life outside the classroom frequently was the basis for underachievement in academic work. The sociogram in varying form was probably the most widely used of the devices other than creative writing on problem situations in the classroom.

Extremes of emotional difficulty have been recognized through the projective techniques used by teachers, such as drawings and themes. Those used by the counselor in the more difficult cases were given according to the need and at the discretion of the counselor.

Information collected from other reliable sources. The academic records of the superior students who were underachievers were examined to try to ascertain at what point disinterest in achievement began, or if it had been constant. The personal information found in the folders was examined for the purpose of finding additional clues, if any, to the difficulty. None of a general nature common to a number of them were found, leading the investigator to feel that each individual case would have to be studied as a case history before any real progress could be made. The guidance personnel, after consultation with the students to determine attitudes, obtained other possible information through contact with dormitory counselors, conversation with

close friends or roommates involved. In the best interest of the students, this information was handled cautiously to be certain that it was reliable.

# III. SUCCESS OF METHODS USED

Improvement shown between freshman and sophomore years. Ideally, Wingate College would like to be able to say that all students who have passed through that institution of higher learning have been challenged sufficiently to achieve at the level of their ability. This has not been the case. Due to a multiplicity of factors, greatest of which is the student's own attitude and cooperation, some of them have not been reached.

Table XI shows that of the twenty superior students classified as underachievers, only 40 per cent of them showed any improvement in the sophomore year over the freshman year in grade point average. No change was shown in the grade point average of 5 per cent of the group, while a lower grade point average was shown by 55 per cent of the group. Of the twenty students classified as achievers, 50 per cent of them showed an improvement in the sophomore year over that of the freshman year, 25 per cent remained the same, and 25 per cent dropped in their grade point average.

TABLE XI

IMPROVEMENT SHOWN BETWEEN FRESHMAN AND

SOPHCMORE YEARS IN GRADE AVERAGES

Grade point	Underachievers		Achievers	
average	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage
Higher	8	40	10	50
No change	1	5	5	25
Lower	11	55	5	25

# CHAPTER IV

# SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary. The combined data assembled in the study by the investigator revealed that there has been identification of underachievers at Wingate College, who have been recognized and diagnosed as such through the guidance program; and that those underachievers have been counseled in an effort to help them reach their potentials. However, there has been side variation in the employment of the various counseling services offered by Wingate College to the students by those responsible for their guidance.

Examination of the records of the 279 regular, or full-time, sophomore students in the study revealed fifty-one of the students to be superior, based on Intelligence Quotients of 120 or more found on the Otis Quick-Scoring Mental Ability Test, Gamma FM. A scatter diagram of these Intelligence Quotients and the grade point averages revealed twenty of the superior students to be underachievers; the remainder of the students were considered achievers.

Overachievers were not considered in the study.

The twenty underachievers were compared with twenty of the achievers in Intelligence Quotient, scores on the

achievement tests, grade point averages, other test percentile ranks and personal information gathered from the files of the individual students.

In this study, it was revealed that 40 per cent of the students classified as underachievers were encouraged sufficiently through the guidance program to raise their grade point average in the sophomore year over that of the freshman year. No improvement was made by 5 per cent of the students. Fifty-five per cent of the students actually achieved on a level in the sophomore year lower than that of the freshman year.

Conclusions. Conclusions drawn in this study cannot be absolute, due to the limitations. However, there are certain points which should be considered.

The fact that 40 per cent of the students classified as underachievers in the study were encouraged sufficiently to raise their grade point average in the sophomore year over that of the freshman year indicates that the guidance methods employed in this area were moderately successful. The extent to which they were successful will probably never be fully known unless further study of them can be made in a follow-up of success in further academic work.

The fact that 5 per cent of the underachievers made no improvement at all and 55 per cent of them actually

achieved on a level in the sophomore year lower than that of the freshman year indicates that more judicious use of present guidance methods needs to be emphasized, and perhaps additional services should be instituted.

Recommendations. It should be emphasized that in dealing with the complexities of human personality, there is no panacea for the ills of ommission or commission in educational guidance, particularly guidance of the underachiever. The success or failure of the student depends, in the final analysis, upon him. However, if, along the way, proponents of Christian principles in education can help him improve his concept of his own personal worth in relation to God and his fellowmen, the outstanding purpose of Christian higher education will have been accomplished.

Bearing this philosophy in mind, the investigator would make the following recommendations for the improvement of the use of guidance methods in attempting to diagnose and correct underachievement among superior students at Wingate College:

- 1. A study committee composed of five carefully selected members of the faculty and administration should be designated for the purposes of
  - a) formulating an adequate and workable philosophy of the guidance program in terms of under-

- achievement among superior students,
- b) interpreting that philosophy to the faculty in order to insure fullest cooperation,
- c) evaluating the tools and techniques to be used in the guidance of the underachievers, and
- d) making recommendations as the need arises.
- 2. A study should be made of the freshman students by the guidance department at the end of the first quarter of work to determine which of the students can be considered superior and which of the superior students can be classified as underachievers.
- 3. These students should then be re-assigned to advisors especially interested and qualified, who would make case studies for diagnostic purposes, utilizing personal data questionnaires, autobiographies, personal inventories, personal interviews and any tool or technique available.
- 4. These special advisors should work closely with the director of guidance services for the college in individual conferences with these underachievers among the superior students for the purpose of determining causes of the underachievement and proposing a possible plan for its correction.
- 5. At the end of the school year, preferably at the final faculty meeting, an evaluation of the committee's

work should be presented by the counselor or a member of the committee for discussion and proposals for the future.

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