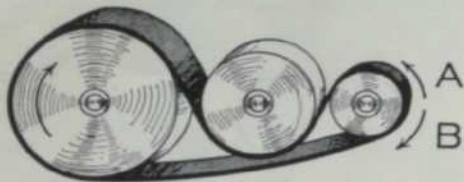


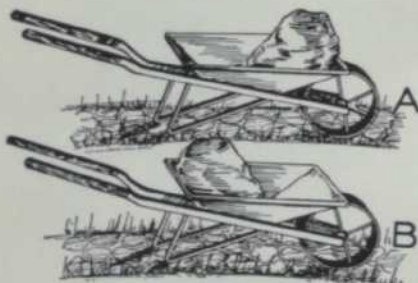
# A Choice for a Lifetime

BY CONNIE RUGGLES

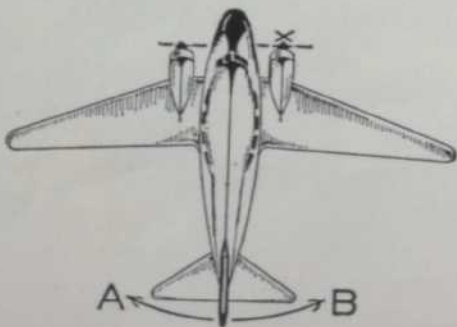
**MECHANICAL COMPREHENSION TEST**  
The examples below are merely a sampling from one of the battery of tests used by Guidance Service counselors in helping University students choose a field where they have the best chance of achieving satisfaction and success.



1. If the large wheel moves in the direction shown, in which direction will the small one move?



2. Which way will it be easier to carry the rock in the wheelbarrow?



3. To keep the plane going straight if the engine "X" stops, in which direction should the rudder be moved?

**A**DJUSTING to the sudden change between life at home and life on a college campus is not always easy for a student, especially for a student who is still uncertain about his career plans in college and beyond. At home he could usually count on consultation with parents who are thoroughly familiar with his day-to-day problems, and chances are that they could work them out together. But at college it's a different story. Mother and Dad are far away, and the college freshman is on his own.

But the adjustment need not be a grim and lonely one, even for the most undecided student. When he first arrives on campus, each freshman attends a preliminary information session where he is briefed on general University services and procedures. His briefing includes a talk by Dr. Clell Warriner, '56ms, '60ph.d, new director of one of the University's least known but most active offices, the Guidance Service.

"We try to stress one fact with all prospective students," Dr. Warriner says, "that it is not supremely important to have a vocation all mapped out before they come to college." Dr. Warriner impresses freshmen with this fact, and he feels that it should be drummed into high school students as often as possible from as many sources as possible. Too often, while still in high school, a student exhibits an interest in a particular career then finds himself propelled toward that career in college when his real abilities and best chances for success are in an altogether different field.

Actually, the Guidance Service has found that the typical freshman does not have definite vocational plans, even though he

may list a particular field of interest as his major on his enrolment forms. But the purpose of that first year in University College is to give each student a chance to shop around, to take a variety of courses, read extensively, talk to advisers, counselors, professors, friends and people in various professions before deciding on a specific course of study. These freshman courses at the University are designed to fit any curriculum, eliminating the necessity of choosing a major the first day on campus and sticking to that decision no matter what.

If, however, a student has not had any vocational testing in high school, and he cannot determine for himself where his interests lie after reaching college, Dr. Warriner and the rest of the Guidance Service personnel are ready to help him.

The Guidance Service is just what its name suggests—not a vocational placement center but a source of student counseling, guidance and testing. After an initial interview, a staff member administers a battery of tests specially selected from the many available, charts the student's interest areas and advises him of the fields where he will probably do best. But no one says, "You are definitely engineer material. Go enroll." If the preliminary tests and interviews show an inclination toward that field, Dr. Warriner and his staff will point this out to the student, but they will also point up additional areas of capabilities and possibly recommend other persons to consult and books to read before attempting a final choice.

The Guidance Service is building a current library of vocational materials where a student may find information on the

# the guidance service is equipped to help students help themselves with that all-important career decision

training required for a wide variety of fields at different levels and the nationwide salary schedules for these fields. If the Guidance Service staff does not have the specific information, they can refer to the main library resources. In addition, they try to maintain a complete array of catalogs from colleges throughout the state and nation.

There are four student problems that crop up most frequently at the Guidance Service. A large part of their work comes from students who have never given any concrete thought to a vocational choice. Too, many students come to the Service for vocational guidance because they have been under pressure from various relatives to enter a certain profession. Some students come to the University with a fixed set of long-range expectancies. They might come to the Guidance Service asking "What field can I go into that will pay me \$20,000 a year?" In the case of freshmen, many have heard only of law, medicine and engineering, giving no thought to the other areas of training offered on campus. In cases such as these the student might take a battery of tests and have the results compared with established norms. The student and his parents too, if possible, confer with one of the Service staff members who listens, interprets and recommends a more favorable course of study. Sometimes this approach works; sometimes not, but the advice and testing are available, free for the asking.

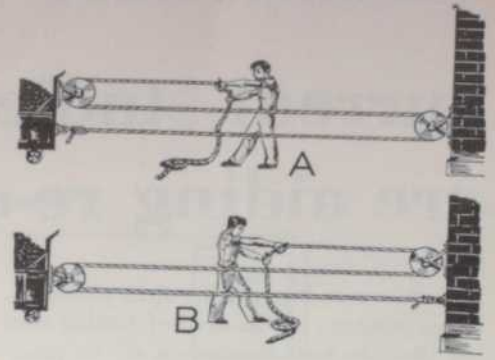
The case load at the Guidance Service is sporadic at best. During August, for example, the student body is gone; the University offices are on relaxed schedule, and almost the only students needing counseling are incoming freshmen who come to the

campus for preliminary testing. At this time the top floor in the Carnegie Building is quiet. But at other times there aren't enough hours in a day to see all the students waiting for appointments. At one of the busiest times of the year, the end of the first semester, there is usually a three-week waiting list for appointments, and the conference and testing rooms are busy throughout the day. At this time the bulk of the counseling load comes from University students. Most of them, for one reason or another, have not done well the first semester and are looking for help to put them back on the gradepoint track.

The Guidance Service works closely with the deans of the various colleges, and gets many referrals from University College Dean Glenn Couch and Admissions Dean John Fellows. Students with low grade averages seeking to transfer from other schools are often sent to Warriner to determine their chances of maintaining a solid C average at the University.

In reality the Service's prime concern is not testing but counseling and serves as part of a network of counselors throughout the University. The most immediate source of guidance for students is the dormitory counselors who are students themselves. They have undergone a training period through the housing office and have been briefed on interpreting the American College Testing Program scores which are on file for all students. They can offer a great deal of help to the students in their charge. The advisers and deans in the various colleges are also available to help. Many students come to the University with a fat file of interest test scores ready to be used by

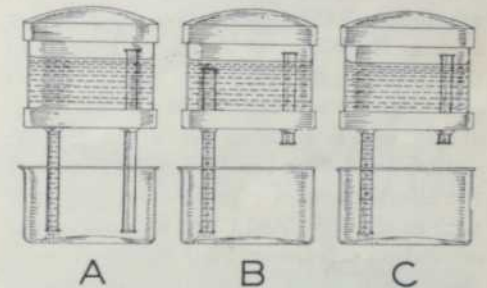
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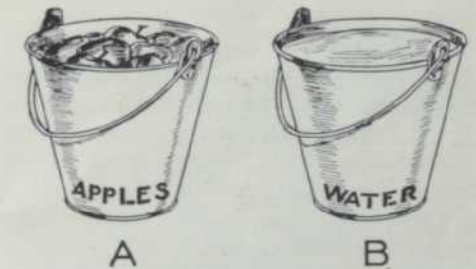
4. Which man will have to pull harder in order to move the load?



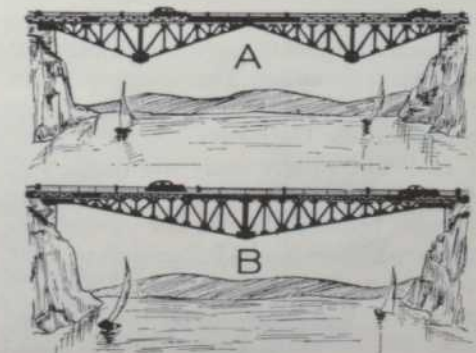
5. Past which point will more water pass in one minute?



6. Which jar will let the most water run out?



7. Which weighs more?



8. Which bridge is stronger?

ANSWERS ON FOLLOWING PAGE

# current studies of student achievement are aiding re-evaluation of O.U. courses

the advisers in interpreting their problems. Other students are in need of further testing. But the tests themselves are no panacea. They are simply the groundwork for further personal counseling whether at the Guidance Service itself or somewhere else on the campus.

The Service is operated through the office of the dean of students, and faculty members and graduate students in the psychology curriculum serve as staff members. Their work is not limited simply to counseling, although that is a major portion of it. Virtually all national testing on campus is administered through the Guidance Service such as the National Teachers' Exam and the Graduate Record Exam. The personnel also help the scholarship committee in deciding which students are to receive the available aid. The Service helps to measure the effectiveness of experimental programs such as the 1954 Red Cross first aid course offered on television. Staff members work closely with the University administration in determining how to change the course offerings and the various requirements for entrance and graduation.

As a part of this work the Service has conducted two studies in student behavior and is beginning a third this fall. The first was begun in 1952. Each new freshman was recorded in the study, and his progress was followed as long as he remained at the University. The results revealed the number of students in each field, the range of capabilities, the average success or failure and other facts which would aid University officials in determining where new students might need more guidance or preparation. That study was completed in 1958 when the last student in the group left the University.

In 1960 a similar study was begun with the freshman class to chart similarities and changes between the two test groups. The first report was issued in September, 1961, with a second report in summer, 1962. This project which will be completed when the last 1960 freshman leaves O.U., is under the direction of Dean Couch; Dr. William B. Lemmon, director of the psychological clinic; Dr. Maurice Temerlin, chairman of

the department of psychology, and Dr. Warriner.

Through the work of these people and their associates the massive job of compiling test data and personal data on each student has been done and the project set in working order. The study considers only 1960 freshman who had no previous college experience of any kind. In general, the goal of the project is to determine the number, percentage, test performance, high school background and college achievement of students who (a) enter, (b) succeed and (c) fail in each department and college of the University.

Charting the academic careers of 1,889 University students is directly related to the growth of the University. With state high schools gradually upgrading the quality of college preparatory work and University enrollment rising every year, the academic level of the college courses needs to be constantly re-evaluated. This 1960 survey and its 1952 counterpart have had a hand in the gradual elimination of some remedial courses, the establishment of advanced classes and honors programs and in effecting a uniform test battery (ACT) for all incoming freshmen.

One of the major handicaps encountered in the first two studies has been the time lag between the beginning of the work and the actual publication of results. For instance, the study of the class of 1960 was begun at the time the group enrolled at O.U., but the first report, which included only high school background and ACT test scores, was not available until a year later. By this time the committee was deep in organizing the data on the class's first college year to prepare a report that again would be a year behind the facts when it was finally published.

A portion of the time lag has been overcome by computer-processing, however,

and the third study—of 1962 freshmen—will be much more valuable. Any time one of the group adds to his record, the data will be fed into the computer and related to the existing information. With such current material at hand, the projected results and average expectancies for any student can be charted for any given field to show his chances for success or failure. Such facts, which are invaluable for guidance and counseling work, can be available to the advisers in a fraction of the time required in the past, primarily because of additional operating funds made available by a \$2,200 allocation from the 1961 Alumni Development Fund.

As part of the computer work Warriner and his staff have taken data on students who completed four years of college work and backtracked on their records, feeding the information into the computer to see if the machine can predict the grade averages actually achieved with any degree of accuracy. Results of the test groups have been accurate to a tenth of a point in nine out of ten people. That is, a student may have achieved a 2.5 average, while the machine estimates a 2.4 or a 2.6. Naturally there are always some exceptions to such prediction procedure—the over-achievers and the students who for some unanticipated reason cannot maintain their previous high standings. But Warriner and his staff have every hope that the machine predictions will work as well with the beginning student to help give him some idea of his chances in his chosen field.

However, the Guidance Service makes no claims for the computer system as a sure fire road to success in any field. Rather, Dr. Warriner encourages students to work independently and with their advisers in determining an academic path. After the student himself has taken the initiative, he is welcome at the Guidance Service for further aid in determining his needs, but the Service refuses to be a crutch. It is not a decision-making program for indecisive students. It exists simply as another guide for producing University graduates who have every chance for success in their chosen fields.

## ANSWERS

- |      |          |
|------|----------|
| 1. B | 5. Equal |
| 2. A | 6. C     |
| 3. A | 7. B     |
| 4. B | 8. B     |