

**MEMORIAL RESOLUTION OF THE FACULTY
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON**

ON THE DEATH OF ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR EMERITUS WILLIAM F. THOMAS

William Frederick Thomas was born on May 6, 1912. He received a PhD in psychology from the University of Illinois in 1939, marrying Gertrude Jane Schuyler along the way. He came to the University of Wisconsin Student Counseling Center as the assistant director in July of 1951, having served in a similar capacity at Navy Pier in Chicago. In addition to his duties as an administrator, Dr. Thomas found time to teach Abnormal Psychology for a number of years and also delivered seminars on personnel testing to various groups.

Dr. Thomas had been actively recruited in an effort to strengthen the staff of the Student Counseling Center both in training and experience. It was a fortuitous choice as Bill went on to become an assistant to UW President E.B. Fred while still holding down a half-time position in the Student Counseling Center. In 1961 the regents promoted Dr. Thomas to director and associate professor of the Wisconsin State Testing Program and assistant director and associate professor of the Student Counseling Center. It is as the director of the Wisconsin State Testing Program that he is most well known. That program provided standardized testing batteries and scoring services to Wisconsin public schools at rates much cheaper than those available through testing companies. At one point 98% of the school districts in the state took advantage of this program and over one-half million students were tested annually. It was considered one of the best public relations programs with the high schools that the university had ever carried out and Dr. Thomas made sure it ran smoothly and didn't cost the university a cent. High school principals called on him frequently with questions about educational testing. He was also a very well known figure in the Departments of English and Mathematics as he worked diligently to make sure all new freshmen were appropriately placed in entry level courses.

Dr. Thomas was known for being gentle and kind while always maintaining his professionalism. He would host a party each summer at his farm and make sure everyone, even the newest undergraduate student worker, felt welcome. When the testing part of the Student Counseling Center was pulled out of the Division of Student Affairs and transferred as the Office of Testing and Evaluation Services to the School of Education in 1974, Dr. Thomas made sure the transition was smooth and that the integrity of the programs did not suffer.

Dr. Thomas retired in 1976, eventually moving to Nebraska to be near his children. He passed away on October 14, 1997. Although the Wisconsin State Testing Program no longer exists, the Office of Testing and Evaluation Services is still active in state-wide testing issues and making sure that in-coming UW students are appropriately placed in classes. His legacy continues.

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