



Department of Psychology
1285 Franz Hall
Box 951563
Los Angeles, CA 90095

Dr. Jermaine F. Williams
President, Montgomery College

July 20th, 2023

RE: MC's Transformational Aspirations: Access, Completion and post completion Success.

Dear Dr. Williams:

On behalf of the Bjork Learning and Forgetting Lab at University of California, Los Angeles, and in partnership with COGx, we are pleased to offer our support to Montgomery College for your bold leadership to refresh the College's strategic plan in light of the dramatic changes and adverse effects the pandemic had on our society. This noble cause of improving Access, Completion and Success for your students must be achieved and is necessary for our shared prosperity. Through our careers, we have demonstrated that it is possible by transforming the educational system to one that is more inclusive of research and evidence from cognitive science.

Decades of research has shown that much of what we think we know about learning stands opposite to how learning actually works. These misunderstandings permeate our educational system. As a result, students are not learning effectively and efficiently, making them less prepared for college and less likely to graduate and be successful in life. These challenges are more pronounced for students who have struggled academically in their past or come from lower income families. Sadly, their struggles have only been magnified by the pandemic. Many of these students will bring their dream of earning a college degree to MC this fall, aspiring to become the "exception in their family rather than the expectation." As you state, great Access demands *"innovative teaching and delivery models to ensure equitable access and success for all students and employees."*

Together with other prominent human learning and memory researchers/experts around the world, we have discovered proven techniques that make both teaching and learning markedly more effective. Yet these techniques are not widely deployed in our schools around the world. COGx is changing that. They have devoted 13 years to translating scientific research and evidence-based practice into accessible programs. They are rigorous and holistic in their approach and committed to applying research findings and evidence with fidelity. As a result, they are making great strides in changing the status quo in education to one that embraces scientific research on learning.

The COGx Program for Educators and for Students is based on rigorous research on how to best facilitate student learning. The foundational learning principles which underlie these programs have been shown to increase several different outcomes (e.g., GPA, self-efficacy, self-regulation of learning) for a variety of student populations (e.g., K-College) and in many contexts (e.g., in-classroom learning, online learning).

These programs take the perspective of students as holistic learners, incorporating evidence-based principles of socioemotional learning, self-regulated learning, and our own work on “desirable difficulties” to promote students’ motivation to learn, long-term learning, transfer of learning to new challenges and contexts, and management of their learning.

Evidence supporting the online content of this program is robust. Additionally, the feature of providing expert coaching ensures context-appropriate application of course principles and fidelity in adoption of these principles by your school system, which is central to benefitting student learners who participate in this program as well as to transferring capacity and sustaining outcomes

Our Lab at the University of California, Los Angeles has worked closely with COGx to develop the content of the program, and we are confident that it reflects the most cutting-edge research on the science of learning. We believe COGx programs on the Science of Learning have the potential to considerably enhance the academic achievement and college completion rate for Montgomery College students.

We look forward to continuing our partnership with COGx on this important endeavor.

Sincerely,



Robert A. Bjork
Distinguished Research Professor
UCLA



Elizabeth Ligon Bjork
Professor
UCLA