

Feb. 26, 2026

Letter to: President Rigg and Provost Vainio-Mattilia

From: Dr. Francis, Dr. Pacharn, Dr. Tanyildiz, Dr. Van Ingen, PACHRED Co-ordinating Committee

We are writing in response to comments at Senate yesterday as we could not respond from the floor, as we are not senators.

First, Provost Vainio-Mattilia said that she has no intention of reducing the staff workforce by one third of current positions and that this was misinformation. In the PACHRED letter we spoke about a reduction in the administrative staff in the academic units, ***not*** as the Provost said at Senate one-third of the staff across the university (resulting in 2000 people). We received the one third figure from a respected leader on your side of the house who had access to that information. Frankly we would be delighted if the new funding from the province means this is not going to be the case.

To-date, we are hearing from OSSTF that 44 positions were laid off. 23 new positions were created which are administrative assistants and stayed as OSSTF. However, some of the 44 people who were laid off were re-hired outside of the bargaining unit. Nine of the 23 new positions went down a level from H to I and two will go from J to H. While there might be different ways of speaking about the impact, there was a net loss of 20.5 FTE positions in OSSTF.

From the perspective of what it looks like 'on the ground' many faculty are seeing their administrative supports cut substantively and they see how the new Academic Coordinator and Administrative Assistant positions will be overloaded with covering the workload of multiple departments. We are also aware that these impacts are unequal across the university.

At the *Stronger Together* event on Tuesday with a keynote by Jenny Ahn from OCUFA, Dr. Francis sat at a table with three administrative assistants from the Humanities, none of whom she had met before, who had been laid off and then re-hired into new positions. From their perspective, these new jobs were going to involve twice or three times as much work for the same pay, but they accepted them as they and their families need the income.

From the perspective of the people who have been doing the work 'on the ground' they also talked about how poorly constructed the new job descriptions were, something else that speaks to a process that is not informed by the 'realities on the ground'. And, they said that when jobs are reviewed in six months, they would not be able to provide feedback on the volume of work, just the accuracy of the list of the work tasks. I am sure several department chairs (in addition to Fiona Hunter, Chair, Biology, who spoke at Senate) will submit deputations

about the 'workability' of the new system to the next meeting of Senate so you can hear more about this from them directly.

Provost Vainio-Mattilia also said that there were no Non-Disclosure Agreements. We know from OSSTF representatives who sat in on meetings with their members, and faculty who sat in those meetings when OSSTF representatives were not available (because so many people were being laid off at the same time) that staff who accepted retirement packages were asked to sign a document that OSSTF lawyers said included NDA provisions to have access to that package. To be specific here is the wording that staff needed to agree to: "Except as required by law, I agree that I shall not, either directly or indirectly, communicate the terms of the Voluntary Separation Opportunity with anyone, other than to my professional advisors, members of my immediate family, Service Canada and the Canada Revenue Agency."

Provost Vainio-Mattilia said in Senate yesterday that there was no process of centralization across the university. However, the OPC email that went out to the university described a process of job re-structuring that involves creating a central 'pool' of administrative assistants, by Faculty, who work for multiple departments, not just one. Again, chairs, GPD's and directors are best placed to speak to the 'efficiency' of that model.

Regarding reducing the number of unionized workers: it is simply a fact that there has been an overall reduction in the number of unionized staff positions through this restructuring, and this continues a process that has been ongoing for the past fifteen years at Brock. When people have their jobs eliminated and then are asked to accept new jobs that no longer have union protection, this is a form of job loss and has a real and profound impact on the capacity of workers to feel anything other than precarious in their work.

In the PACHRED letter, we spoke about some of these realities to raise the alarm and mobilize people to respond to this profoundly non-transparent process. We are deeply concerned about upcoming layoffs and restructuring that we hear are around the corner (Academic Advisors, Experiential Learning, Graduate Supports and other folks in Academic Professional positions) but have no concrete information about these changes. It is the sweeping changes without transparency that are resulting in fear and a shift in culture on campus.

Indeed, we can see the alarm in the significant presence of faculty, students and staff at Senate on Feb. 25th and the 120 BUFA members who attended a special General Members Meeting on restructuring on Feb. 12th. This mobilization demonstrates how important these issues are to the wider Brock community. It is critical to point out that at Senate, students, who had just received the news of the dramatic *decrease* in OSAP grant funding, provided a message that was very clear – they fear this restructuring will also impact them.

When you double the number of AVP's and provide them with wage increases that are dramatically out of step with other workers at the university and then, in response to a funding crisis, implement cuts that target the lowest paid workers on campus -- it looks deeply inequitable, because it is.

with respect,

Margot Francis, Associate Professor, Centre for Women's and Gender Studies

Parunchana Pacharn, Professor, Accounting

Gokboru Sarp Tanyildiz, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology and Criminology

Cathy Van Ingen, Professor, Kinesiology