

June 7, 2020

**An open letter to the Brock community:**

On Friday, June 5, the University became aware of a paper written by Professor Tomáš Hudlický that was published and then retracted by the journal *Angewandte Chemie*.

The paper includes highly objectionable statements that contrast the promotion of equity and diversity with the promotion of academic merit. These statements are hurtful and alienating to members of diverse communities and historically marginalized groups who have, too often, seen their qualifications and abilities called into question.

The article moreover contains descriptions of the graduate supervisor-graduate student relationship that connote disrespect and subservience. These statements could be alarming to students and others who have the reasonable expectation of respectful and supportive mentorship.

The statements contained in the paper are not representative of the Brock community. They are utterly at odds with the values of Brock's deeply committed research mentors, and all those working hard to build an inclusive and diverse community. They do not reflect the principles of inclusivity, diversity and equity included in the University's mission, vision and values as approved by our Senate and Board of Trustees.

Together we have made significant strides to foster an institutional culture advancing human rights and reconciliation. Among other actions, in recent years the University has:

- established a Human Rights and Equity Office;
- created a new Ombuds Office;
- hired its first Vice-Provost, Indigenous Engagement;
- launched the President's Advisory Council on Human Rights, Equity, and Decolonization;
- invested significant resources in training and education, including sessions on unconscious bias;
- collectively made an explicit commitment to foster a culture of inclusivity, accessibility, reconciliation and decolonization, under Brock's Institutional Strategic Plan.

Despite this progress, and the shared values that animate these efforts, we recognize there is still much work to do.

The University released a statement Friday outlining its deep concerns and strong opposition to the views expressed in the article. Today, I sent a letter to our graduate

students in Chemistry to let them know there were supports available to them and to provide further assistance should they have questions.

Please be advised that further steps are being considered and developed and these next steps will be shared with the community in the next few days.

If you want to talk to someone or have a question or need support, please contact one of the areas below:

- Office of Human Rights and Equity Services: [lmadhavarau@brocku.ca](mailto:lmadhavarau@brocku.ca)
- Faculty of Graduate Studies: [gradsupport@brocku.ca](mailto:gradsupport@brocku.ca)
- Faculty of Mathematics and Science: [deanfms@brocku.ca](mailto:deanfms@brocku.ca)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gregory C. Finn". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath.

Gregory C. Finn, PhD, PGeo  
Provost and Vice-President, Academic