

MUNFA Provincial Party Leaders Questionnaire:

Provincial Election 2019

Memorial University has a special obligation to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, but its ability to keep this promise is increasingly compromised by cuts in provincial funding. Since 2015, Memorial University has seen successive cuts to its operating grant with the most recent provincial budget confirming that forecasted cuts to funding for Memorial University would be implemented, as previously announced. The University has seen an increase in precarious employment and fewer permanent faculty and support staff positions, with an inevitable erosion of Memorial's ability to continue offering high-quality programs to the students of this province.

Will your party commit to increased investments in core operating funding for Memorial to support quality research and education?

Students, faculty, and staff at Memorial work and study in significantly aging infrastructure. In the absence of adequate funding, Memorial applies band-aid solutions to occupational health and safety concerns. Long-term neglect of existing infrastructure is putting the physical and mental health of many students and employees at risk, and many facilities are no longer fit for their designated teaching and research purposes. Direct investments by the provincial government to address deferred maintenance at Memorial ended effective the 2015-16 fiscal year.

What will your party do to address the deferred maintenance, repair and renewal needs of Memorial University?

There is growing concern among faculty and staff at Memorial University about lengthy delays in the transition to a jointly sponsored pension plan. In August of 2018, Memorial University submitted a Pension Reform Agreement but has yet to receive a substantive response from government. Having already missed key deadlines in our Pension Reform Agreement, the future health of our pension plan and the financial security of members' retirements are becoming increasingly uncertain.

What will your party do to ensure Memorial University's pension deficit (\$416.5M) is addressed and a smooth transition to a jointly sponsored pension plan occurs?

Canadian universities traditionally practice collegial (shared) governance without political interference. Collegial governance means that students, faculty, staff, and administrators share in key decision-making processes. The Canadian Association of University Teachers ranks Memorial University at the bottom among Canadian universities for practices of shared/collegial governance. Memorial is the only university in Canada with no faculty representation on its governing board, and the Memorial University Act is out of sync with the notion of collegial governance.

What will your party do in its commitment to improving the collegial governance and autonomy of Memorial University?

Lastly, Memorial University has long been recognized as one of the most vital public institutions in this province. We invite you to share your party's vision for its role in our collective future.

How does your party view the role of Memorial University in the social, political, cultural, and economic life of NL? What will your party do to strengthen of this role?