



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

Our province has faced challenging times over the last number of years. When we were elected in 2015, we inherited a legacy of fiscal mismanagement. In fact, we had an economic crisis laid at our feet. The former government avoided a fall fiscal update before the 2015 election, allowing people (including us) to believe the deficit was \$1 billion. On December 1, 2015, our first day at work so to speak, we were told the deficit for 2015-16 was expected to be twice that. It was projected it would grow to \$2.7 billion the following year unless action was taken. Unless we did something to immediately address the deficit, we would have to borrow over \$15 billion by 2020-21. That would equate to borrowing nearly \$300,000 an hour to keep the province going.

We also inherited Muskrat Falls from the previous government and with it the responsibility to mitigate electricity rates to prevent them from doubling. Money diverted to mitigate electricity rates is money we now cannot spend on public services or debt reduction. That said, we remain committed to ensuring people do not pay more for electricity as a result of Muskrat Falls, and to having a sustainable balanced budget by 2022-23.

We do not say this to harp on the past, but to provide context from where we started in 2015 to where we are today. Our deficit for 2018-2019 was \$522 million, less than half of what it was when we formed government. That is progress.

We are exceeding the forecasts of the Progressive Conservatives in their 2015 budget on a number of fronts:

- There are more people working in Newfoundland and Labrador than the Conservatives projected.
- Employee compensation (pay) is nearly a quarter of a billion dollars higher than forecast in 2015.
- Project investment is one billion dollars higher than projected in Budget 2015.
- Retail sales are higher than projected.

February 2019 also marked the eighth consecutive month of employment gains, showing growth this province has not seen since 2013. The Conference Board of Canada and Atlantic Provinces Economic Council have both forecast that Newfoundland and Labrador will be among the leaders in economic activity this year.

Our plan is working; however, with deficits projected until sustainable surplus in 2022-23 we must remain diligent in our plan to right the ship. We acknowledge the challenges Memorial is facing. We respect the autonomy of the Board of Regents in prioritizing the allocation of presently available funds

How we move forward on structural issues will be informed a great deal by our recently announced Committee of Experts and Terms of Reference for the independent review of the public post-secondary education system, as was promised in our Way Forward plan. We expect the results of the review to provide a long-term vision for the next decade and beyond for a public post-secondary education system that is effective, sustainable, accountable, accessible, delivers high quality education, contributes to knowledge creation and transfer, and prepares post-secondary students for their future personal and professional lives. We expect to receive the final report in 2020.



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

We are happy that through our collaborative partnership with the federal government, we have been able to secure \$100 million to provide for the new core science building currently under construction.

However, we acknowledge the deferred maintenance, repair and renewal needs. While we remain respectful of the university's autonomy, we confirm that the scope of our independent post-secondary review, under the principle of effectiveness includes the impact of aging infrastructure. We look forward to the report's insights on this as we determine whether our public post-secondary system is meeting the needs of Newfoundland and Labrador.

3. 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?

We acknowledge the pension deficit issue and confirm that one way or another, we will have to close that gap. It is not a matter of choice, it is a necessity. As such, the answer is not whether the gap will be closed but rather how we do it. We look forward to working with Memorial to address this issue.

As stated in responses to earlier questions, a major aspect of the Terms of Reference for the Committee of Experts for Independent Public Post-Secondary Education Review is sustainability. While the pension deficit is not directly targeted in the Terms of Reference, a sustainable pension is crucial and recommendations in respect of revenue generation, public investment to ensure appropriate capacity, optimal system footprint and other matters will be helpful in creating a greater focus on how we address the problem.

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

Another major focus in the Terms of Reference for the Committee of Experts for Independent Public Post-Secondary Education Review is accountability. Accountability is the obligation of an organization to account for its activities, accept responsibility for them, and to disclose the results in a transparent fashion. In the overall review of accountability, committee members will consider, among other things: governance models; institutional mandates and autonomy; institutional administration; legislation; relationship with government; compliance with relevant legislation, policies and procedures; indicators and reporting requirements; and development and performance of internal controls.

5. 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 this role?

We view Memorial University as an integral part of Newfoundland and Labrador's identity. Memorial represents a beacon of hope for every single Newfoundlander and Labradorian to be the best version of themselves, whether it be on an economic level or personal fulfillment level.

Socially and politically the faculty, researchers, instructors and students raise the bar on our collective knowledge base.



Memorial is a part of our culture and specifically, the Department of Folklore, the only Anglophone University in Canada to offer comprehensive folklore programs at all levels, demonstrates a superior ability to broaden our knowledge base of not only our own culture but others as well.

While much is said on the allocation of resources, we must not let the pursuit of perfection get in the way of progress. Memorial University is a critical aspect of this province and that is something our party will always keep top of mind.