

TO: All MUNFA Members

FROM: The MUNFA Executive Committee

DATE: February 8, 2021

SUBJECT: **MUN Strategic Plan Consultation**

The MUNFA Executive would like to draw Academic Staff Members' (ASMs) attention to the ongoing consultation for Memorial University's new Strategic Plan and the accompanying "[What We Heard](#)" document.

After an initial review, it appears that the Strategic Planning Committee is considering significant changes to Memorial University that, if implemented, would radically alter this province's public university. These changes include but are not limited to: a shift towards offering micro-credentials; expansion of online course delivery; heavier reliance on private sector funding; "entrepreneurially mobilizing our knowledge and infrastructure resources through public and private sector partnerships" – in other words, turning the public university into a commercial venture; and narrowing the academic focus of our institution. It is our opinion that such radical changes, which would have significant implications for both the University and the public it serves, need to be afforded much greater consideration by the entire University Community.

We recognize that Strategic Plan consultations have been ongoing for a number of months. However, the recent release of the "What We Heard" document makes clear that Memorial University could be fundamentally and irreversibly changed through the adoption of proposals that would deepen both the commercialization and the corporatization of our public university. In addition, consultation on the Strategic Plan has been taking place while many faculty, staff, and students have been absorbed by coping with and adapting to stresses and changes brought on by a global pandemic.

We believe that the timeline for considering and responding to the "What We Heard" document is far too tight given the implications of the proposals outlined and the very significant workload burdens being experienced by faculty, staff, and students as a result of pandemic protocols within and beyond the University. We call on the committee to extend the deadline for input and encourage ASMs to take the time to [provide feedback](#) on the Strategic Plan (current deadline February 10th).