

## MUNFA MESSAGE

### Response to Budget Update from Dr. Bose

December 6, 2024

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Dear MUNFA Member,

Earlier today (Friday, December 6 - during exams and just before the holiday break), Dr. Neil Bose, President (*pro tempore*) of Memorial University, issued a Budget Update to the University community, which can be found [HERE](#).

This message is deeply concerning to our Union for numerous reasons. While there are external factors currently accelerating and exacerbating Memorial's budgetary challenges, it is important to recognize that our University has endured a decade of funding cuts - something the President's budget memo fails to mention.

MUNFA, along with our Campus Coalition partners, has been sounding the alarm for some time about the consequences of these funding reductions—amounting to a 52% cut over the past decade - on our province's public university. Through initiatives like our [FundMUN](#) campaign, we have highlighted the impact these cuts are having.

Our message to the government, Senior Administration, and the general public has been clear and consistent: Memorial University plays a vital role in our province - academically, socially, culturally, and economically. As Newfoundland and Labrador's only public university, Memorial has a special obligation to serve the people of this province.

Our province needs a properly funded public university where teaching, research, and knowledge mobilization are supported to thrive for the betterment of society.

Our collective demand is straightforward: funding cuts must end and funding must be restored for Memorial University. Doing so is an investment in our province, its people, and our collective future.

Dr. Bose's budget message conveys a vague yet troubling sentiment: budgetary decisions are being implemented to address the University's current financial challenges - and more changes are on the horizon.

In recent days, we have also heard from ASMs in various departments about discussions regarding increases in class-size caps and the potential introduction of class floors (a minimum number of students required to offer classes). These developments, coupled with the message from Dr. Bose, are especially troubling - particularly for contract academic staff.

Dr. Bose's message states, "*The end result will be a more focused, likely somewhat smaller, well-funded, culturally rich institution.*" This raises immediate questions: **smaller how? And, who is making these vital decisions?**

To fulfill its special obligation to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, it is essential that Memorial University maintain its status as a comprehensive institution, with continued legislative support for this designation. If Memorial cannot offer a full suite of programs in the humanities, natural and social sciences, education, and applied sciences, it risks denying some students the opportunity to reach their full potential. Additionally, such a reduction would hinder our province's ability to retain highly skilled individuals and attract talent from Canada and beyond.

MUNFA will be seeking more details and clarification on the processes referenced in Dr. Bose's memo and will update members as more information becomes available.

We understand that this situation is causing stress and anxiety for our members. It is crucial that we stand together—to support one another and to advocate for a well-funded university capable of fulfilling its special obligation to the people of this province.

MUNFA will continue to fight for the interests of our members in the days and weeks ahead. Please email [membership.munfa@mun.ca](mailto:membership.munfa@mun.ca) to provide your feedback, concerns, or input on Dr. Bose's message to better inform our efforts.