



# Annual Report

2019-20

THE MEMORIAL  
UNIVERSITY  
PENSION PLAN

DEPARTMENT OF  
HUMAN RESOURCES,  
MEMORIAL  
UNIVERSITY OF  
NEWFOUNDLAND





# Annual Report of The Memorial University Pension Plan

April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020

Department of Human Resources,  
Memorial University of Newfoundland  
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December 2020

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# Chairperson's Message

Honorable Tom Osborne  
Minister of Education  
West Block, Confederation Building  
P.O. Box 8700  
St. John's, NL  
A1B 4J6

Dear Minister Osborne:

I am pleased to submit the 2019-20 Annual Report of the Memorial University Pension Plan. This report covers the period April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020.

This is the third and final performance-based report to be presented under the Memorial University Pension Plan's Activity Plan for 2017-2020. This document sets forth in clear language how the University has addressed the objectives that were outlined in the plan.

My signature below is on behalf of the Board of Regents and is indicative of our accountability for the actual results reported.

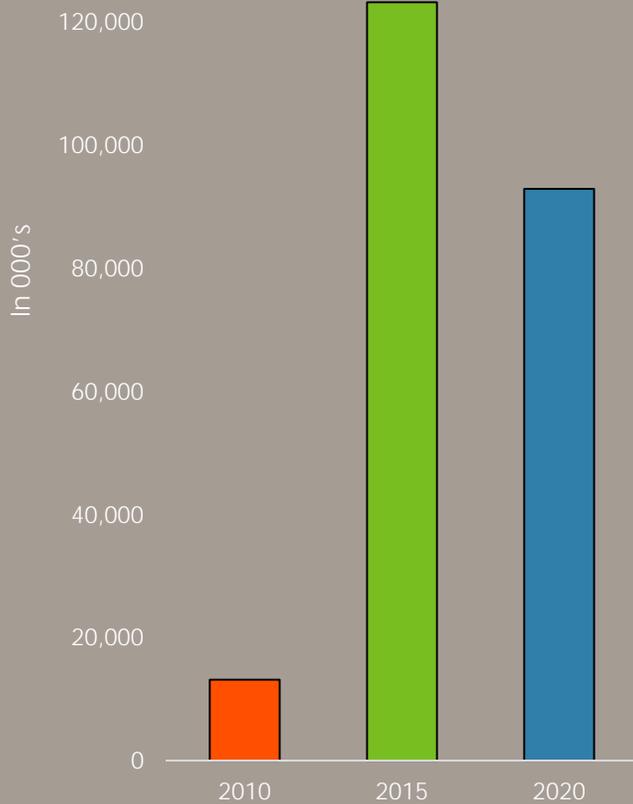
Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Iris Petten". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Iris Petten**  
Chair, Board of Regents

# Pension Plan Highlights

## Investment Income Comparison



84%

Funded Ratio  
(market)

-0.65%

Annual Rate of Return

Benchmark Return

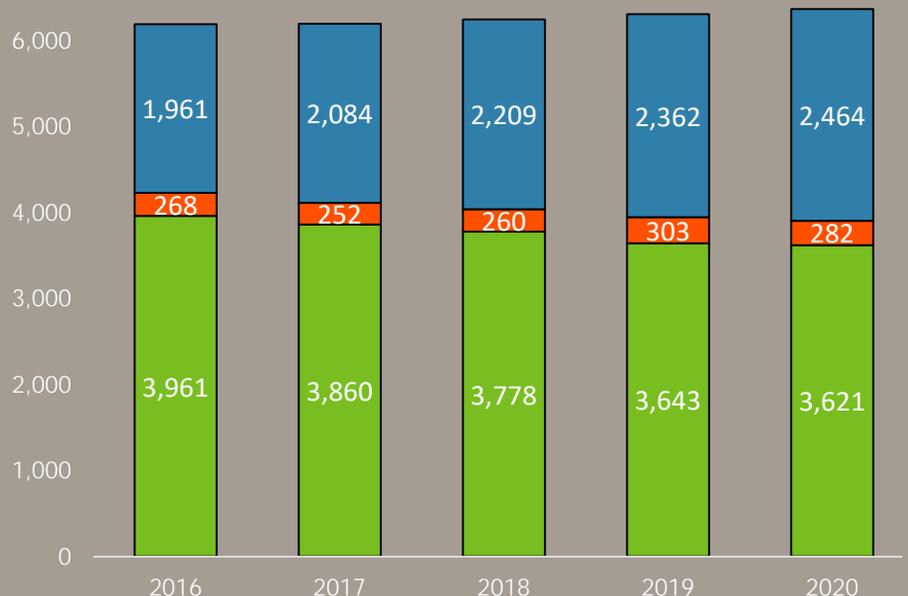
-2.55%

\$1.6 Billion

Net Assets Available for Benefits

## Membership Profile

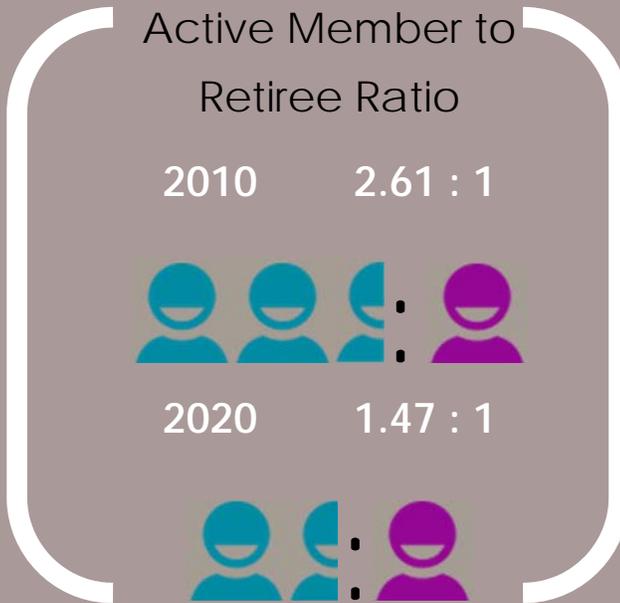
- Retirees & principle beneficiaries 7,000
- Deferred pensioners 6,000
- Active members 5,000



The number of active members decreased by 8.6% over the last 5 years and the number of retirees increased by 25.7%.

# Plan Membership Highlights

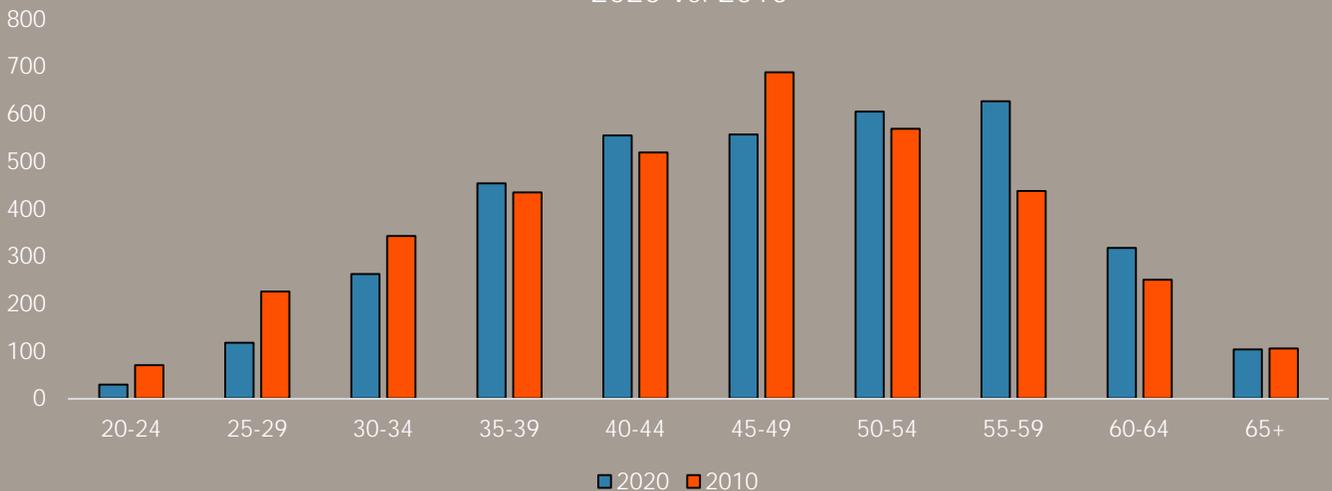
2,010  
Females  
(55.5%)  
ACTIVE MEMBERS  
Males (44.5%)  
1,611



34  
Active employees  
over age  
71

|                               | March 31 |       |       |       |       |
|-------------------------------|----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|                               | 2020     | 2019  | 2018  | 2017  | 2016  |
| Active Members                | 3,621    | 3,643 | 3,778 | 3,860 | 3,961 |
| Average Age of Active Members | 47.5     | 47.3  | 47.2  | 46.8  | 46.6  |
| Retirees (incl. Prin. Ben.)   | 2,464    | 2,362 | 2,209 | 2,084 | 1,961 |
| Deferred Pensioners           | 282      | 303   | 260   | 252   | 268   |
| Average Age at Retirement     | 61.24    | 61.33 | 61.30 | 61.23 | 61.02 |

Age Distribution - Active Members  
2020 vs. 2010



# Pension Plan Overview

The three-year Activity Plan prepared for the Memorial University Pension Plan (the “Plan”) set out the Plan’s objectives for the period April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2020. This Annual Report discusses the outcome of those objectives for the period April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020 and provides additional information on the operation of the Plan for the year then ended. The Board of Regents, as trustee of the Fund, is responsible to ensure compliance with the **Memorial University Pensions Act** and operates under its own vision, mission, and mandate. Refer to the Activity Plan for more information on the Plan’s mandate:

[https://www.mun.ca/hr/services/benefits/Activity\\_Plan\\_2017-2020.pdf](https://www.mun.ca/hr/services/benefits/Activity_Plan_2017-2020.pdf)

## About the Plan

The Memorial University Pension Plan is one of the largest public sector pension plans in the Province and provides a lifetime defined benefit pension upon retirement. The Plan is funded through contributions made by employees and Memorial, as well as income from its investments. The majority of employees at the University’s main campuses are participants in the Plan (i.e. Grenfell Campus, Signal Hill Campus, Marine Institute, Labrador Institute, and the St. John’s Campus).

## Pension Plan Design

The Plan is a contributory defined benefit pension plan, established in 1950 under statute of the provincial legislature. It is designed to provide retirement benefits to full-time permanent employees and qualifying contractual employees of the University. In addition, employees of certain separately incorporated entities of the University and affiliated employers are eligible to participate in the Plan. Benefits, which are integrated with the Canada Pension Plan, are based upon employees’ years of pensionable service, best five-year average pensionable salary, and a two per cent accrual factor.



### PENSION FORMULA:

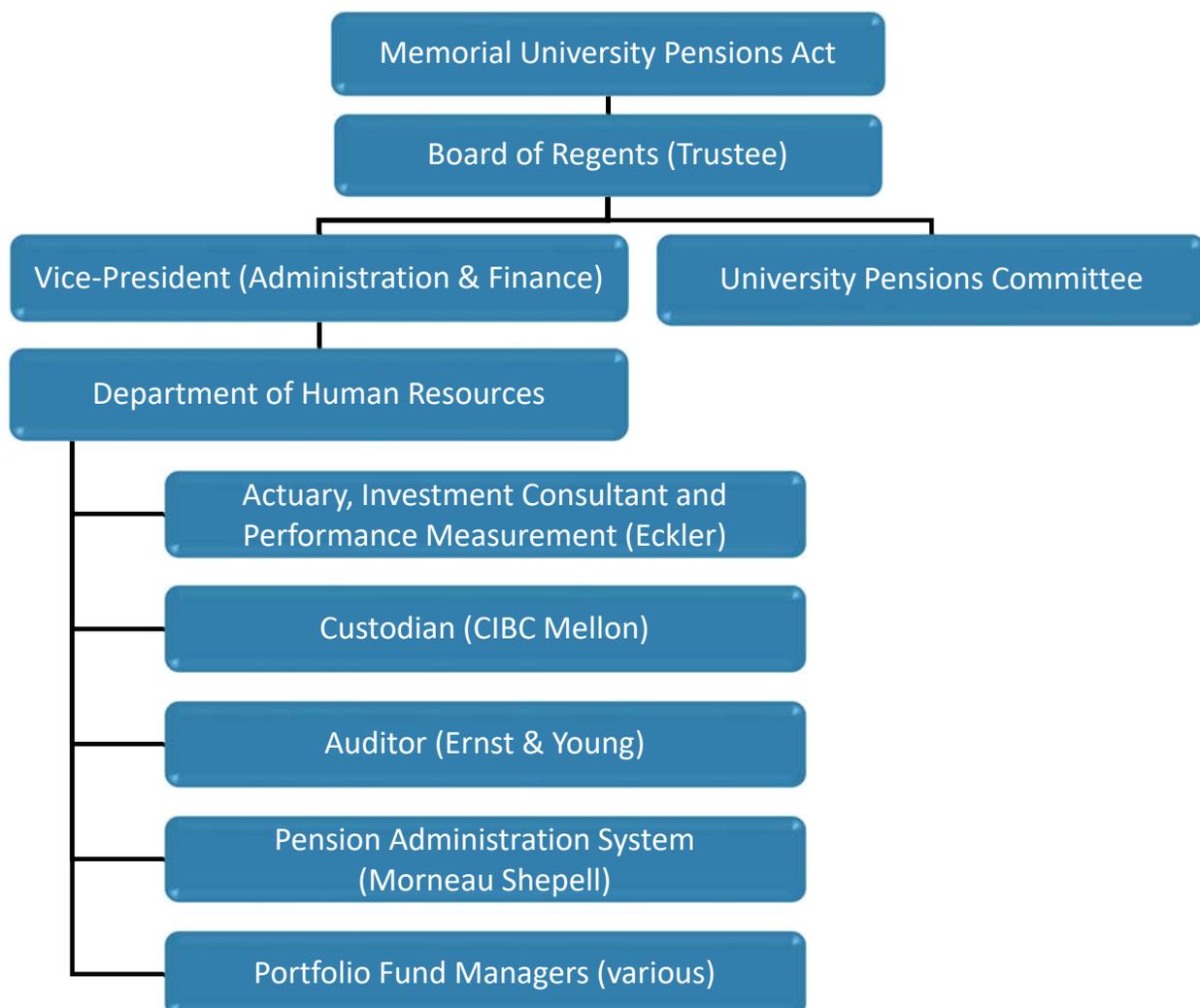
**2% x best 5-year average salary x years of pensionable service (inclusive of a “bridge benefit” to age 65)**

## Authority and Administration

The Plan operates under authority of the **Memorial University Pensions Act**, which prescribes the Board of Regents of the University as trustee. To assist with its responsibilities as trustee, the Board has established a University Pensions Committee to provide advice on matters relating to the Plan. This advisory committee, which has representation from across the entire University community, operates under terms of reference set out by the Board. The actual administration of the Plan is carried out by the University's Department of Human Resources.

The administrative and governance structure of the Plan is outlined below:

Figure 1: Organization Chart



# Investments

All employee and University contributions are paid into the Memorial University Pension Fund (the Fund) for investment by external investment managers. The Statement of Investment Policy and Objectives that has been developed to guide the investment of the Fund, sets out a policy asset mix with the objective of maintaining predictable and stable benefit costs and contributions within a reasonable and acceptable level of risk. The Fund is invested in 13 separate investment mandates that include equities, traditional fixed income, real estate, and mortgages. Of the total investment, 31 per cent has been allocated to foreign equity markets.

The University Pensions Committee routinely monitors the performance of the Fund and where appropriate will recommend changes to the investment policy and its implementation. During the 2019-20 fiscal year, there were no changes to either the asset allocation or the existing investment management firms appointed to invest the Fund. The Committee has, however, begun an asset liability study to quantify risk factors affecting the health and sustainability of the pension plan. Among the objectives will be the establishment of a long-term investment strategy that balances risk with prospective returns in a manner that respects the pension plan's benefit liability characteristics.

## Investing Locally

In its real estate portfolio the pension plan has invested in local commercial real estate:

Office: 351 Water Street, Scotia Place and O'Leary Business Park  
Industrial: Beclin Business Park

## Policy Asset Mix

The policy asset mix set for the investment of the Fund is set out below:

Table 1: Policy Asset Mix

| Asset Class           | Percentage Allocation | Benchmark Index                    |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Canadian Equity       | 25%                   | S&P/TSX                            |
| U.S. Equity           | 21%                   | S&P 500                            |
| International Equity  | 10%                   | MSCI ACWI ex-US                    |
| Canadian Fixed Income | 25%                   | FTSE TMX Universe                  |
| Cash/Short Term       | 3%*                   | n/a                                |
| Real Estate           | 8%                    | CPI + 4%                           |
| Mortgages             | 8%                    | 60% TMX short + 40% TMX mid + 0.5% |

\* Cash is not an active mandate and amounts will vary depending on investment trading activity. For monthly re-balancing purposes, cash is included with active fixed income.

## Investment Manager Benchmark Distribution

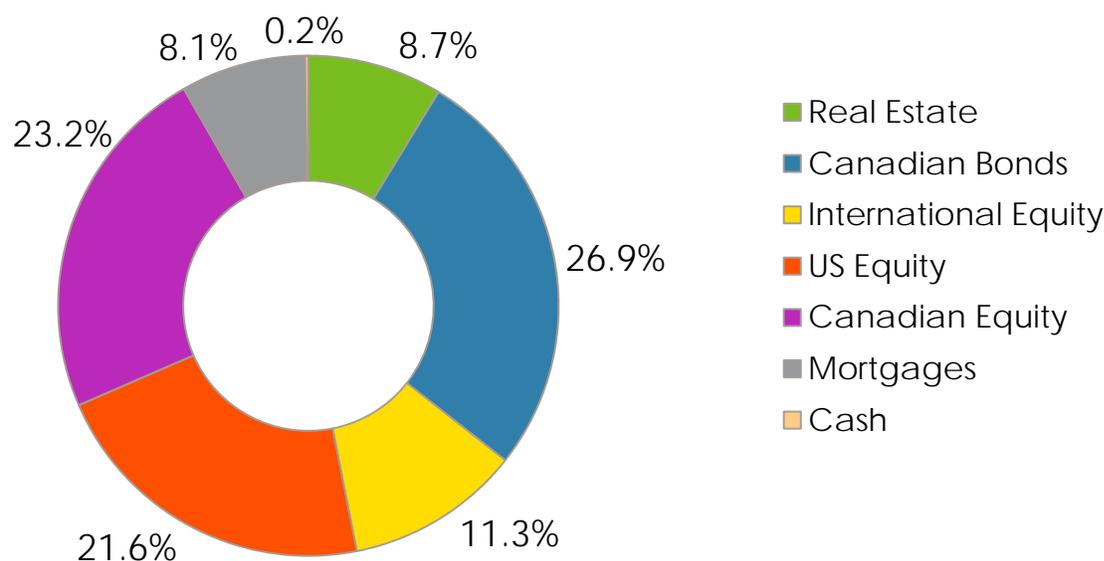
The Fund is invested by external institutional investment management firms. Their mandates and fund allocations are detailed in the table below:

Table 2: Benchmark Distribution

| Manager                      | Mandate               | Benchmark Allocation | Actual Allocation March 31, 2020 |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Jarislowky Fraser            | Canadian Equity       | 12.5%                | 11.5%                            |
| Connor Clark & Lunn          | Canadian Equity       | 6.25%                | 5.4%                             |
| Fidelity Investments Canada  | Canadian Equity       | 6.25%                | 6.3%                             |
| TD Greystone                 | Canadian Fixed Income | 7.75%                | 7.3%                             |
| Jarislowky Fraser            | Canadian Fixed Income | 7.75%                | 7.1%                             |
| CIBC Global Asset Management | Indexed Bonds         | 12.5%                | 12.5%                            |
| Alliance Bernstein           | US Equity             | 21.0%                | 21.6%                            |
| Fiera Capital                | International Equity  | 3.75%                | 4.6%                             |
| Wellington Management        | International Equity  | 3.75%                | 3.6%                             |
| Baillie Gifford              | International Equity  | 2.5%                 | 3.1%                             |
| Fiera Real Estate            | Real Estate           | 3.2%                 | 2.7%                             |
| TD Greystone                 | Real Estate           | 4.8%                 | 6.0%                             |
| TD Greystone                 | Mortgage              | 8.0%                 | 8.1%                             |
| Operating Account            | Cash                  | Nil                  | 0.2%                             |

The relative distribution of assets across the entire Fund, as at March 31, 2020, is illustrated in the following chart:

Figure 2: Distribution of Assets

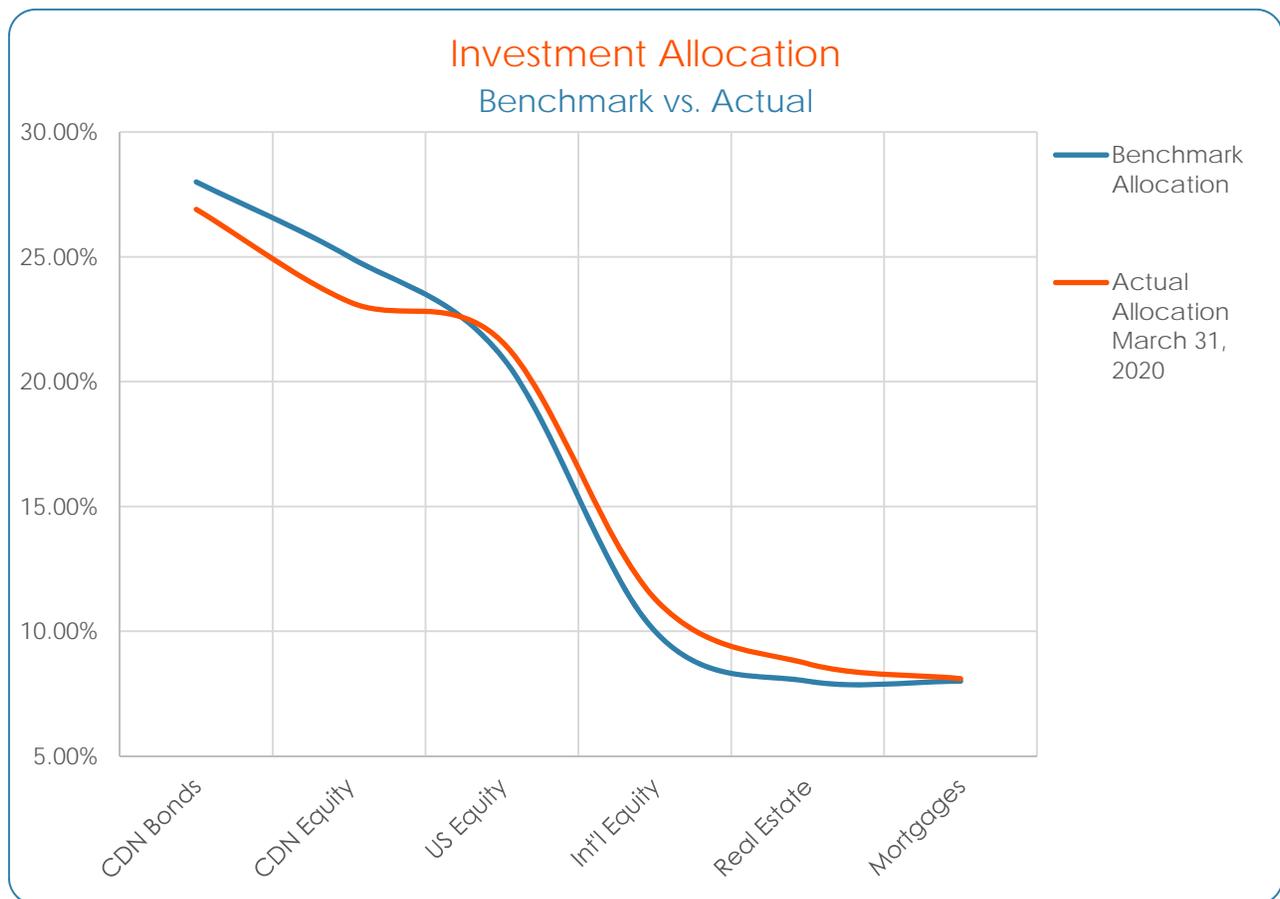


# Rebalancing of Assets

The actual distribution of assets will vary from the policy asset mix over time due to the impact of market forces. Once an asset class moves outside a pre-determined range, a rebalancing will be performed by the University to move funds to or from that asset class to bring it back in line with investment policy limits.

Figure 3: Investment Allocation

Canadian Equity and Bonds were underweight at the end of the fiscal year, while the remaining investment allocations were overweight. All mandates were within their rebalancing limits.



## Investment Performance

The Fund got off to a good start in 2019-20 with strong returns across all mandates in the first quarter. This continued into quarter two, although on a more muted basis and in the face of high volatility across global equity markets which was precipitated by the approaching Brexit deadline and concerns over economic growth. Third quarter gains were exceptional as equity markets posted strong results in response to diminishing global economic and political concerns. The equity market rally, which carried into quarter four, came to a halt mid quarter as global equity markets began a sharp and unprecedented decline as a result of the combined impacts of falling world oil prices and the COVID-19 pandemic. As expected, through the ups and downs of the investment cycles, the real estate and mortgage portfolios continued to provide their stabilizing effect on fund performance.

|                    | Fund Value<br>(\$ Millions) | Quarterly<br>Return (%) |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| June 30, 2019      | 1,706.8                     | 2.59                    |
| September 30, 2019 | 1,718.2                     | 1.63                    |
| December 31, 2019  | 1,775.1                     | 3.86                    |
| March 31, 2020     | 1,617.8                     | -8.25                   |



The Fund ended the year with an annual return of -0.65 percent, well below the Plan's long term hurdle rate of 5.6 percent. Despite being a negative result, this was 1.9 percentage points higher than the Plan's benchmark and ranked in the second percentile in a universe of similarly invested funds. A first percentile ranking represents the top performer in the universe whereas the 100<sup>th</sup> percentile represents the worst.

Annual Return:

|                      |        |
|----------------------|--------|
| March 31, 2020 ..... | -0.65% |
| March 31, 2019 ..... | 8.13%  |

Over the longer term the Fund continues to perform well relative to its benchmark and comparator universe. The five year annualized return of 5.14 per cent surpassed the benchmark by 1.22 percentage points. On a ten year basis the Fund has generated an annualized return of 8.11 per cent, an excess of 1.45 percentage points over its benchmark and ranking it in the third percentile.

The performance of the Fund has exceeded the benchmark in each of the last ten years and has ranked above the median balanced fund in nine of those years. Selected performance metrics are as follows:

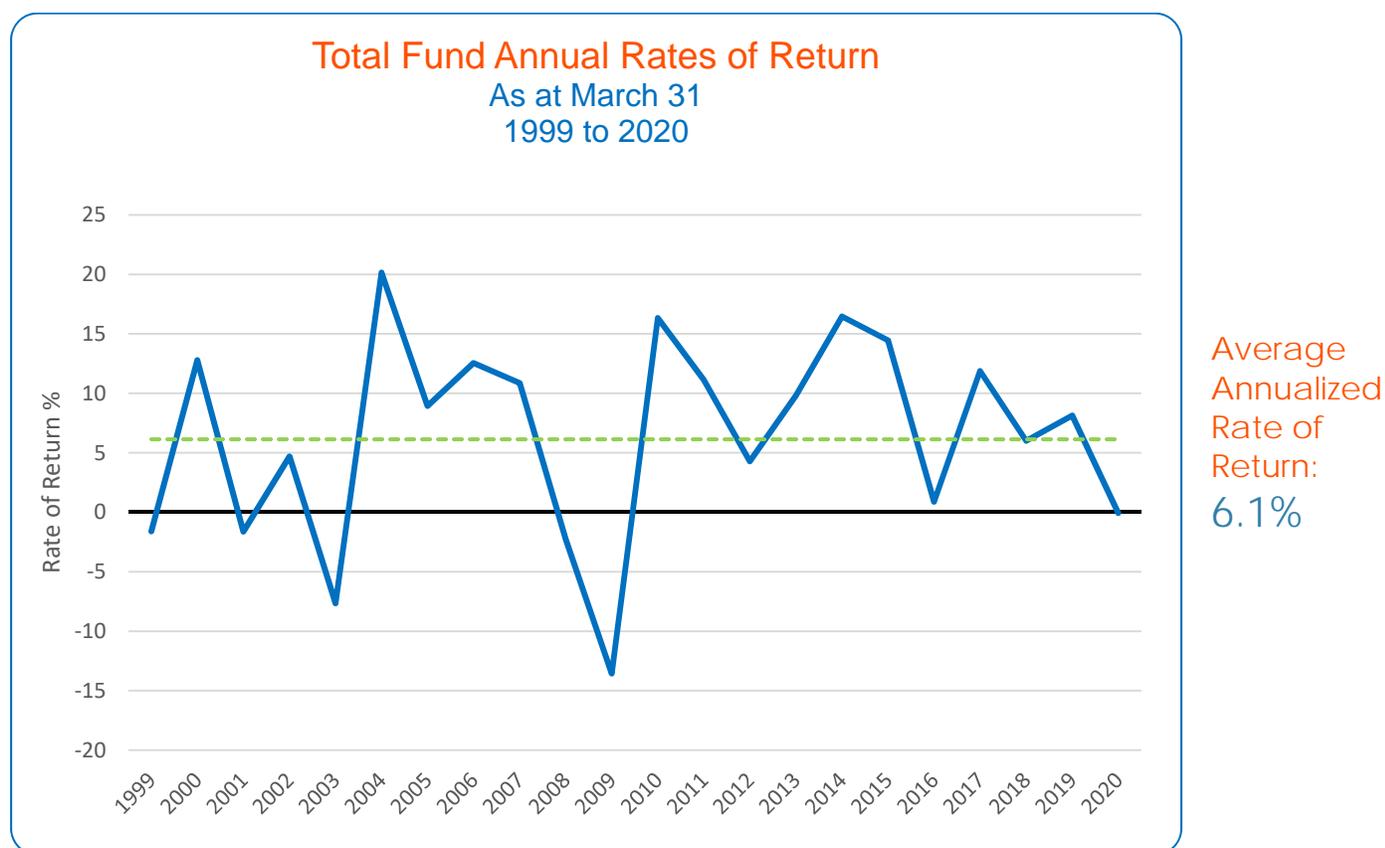
Table 3: Investment Performance (March 31)

|                    | 1 year | 4 years | 5 years | 10 years |
|--------------------|--------|---------|---------|----------|
| Annualized Return  | -.065% | 6.24%   | 5.14%   | 8.11%    |
| Benchmark Return*  | -2.55% | 5.08%   | 3.92%   | 6.66%    |
| Value Added        | 1.90%  | 1.16%   | 1.22%   | 1.45%    |
| Percentile Ranking | 2      | 2       | 1       | 3        |

\* The benchmark is the expected return of the Fund based upon a passive investment in the indices underlying the policy asset mix.

Figure 4: Rate of Return

Annual fund returns over the period 1999 to 2020 are presented in the chart below.



Note: For presentation purposes, long term returns are available from 1999 onwards. Past returns should not be viewed as an indicator of future fund performance.

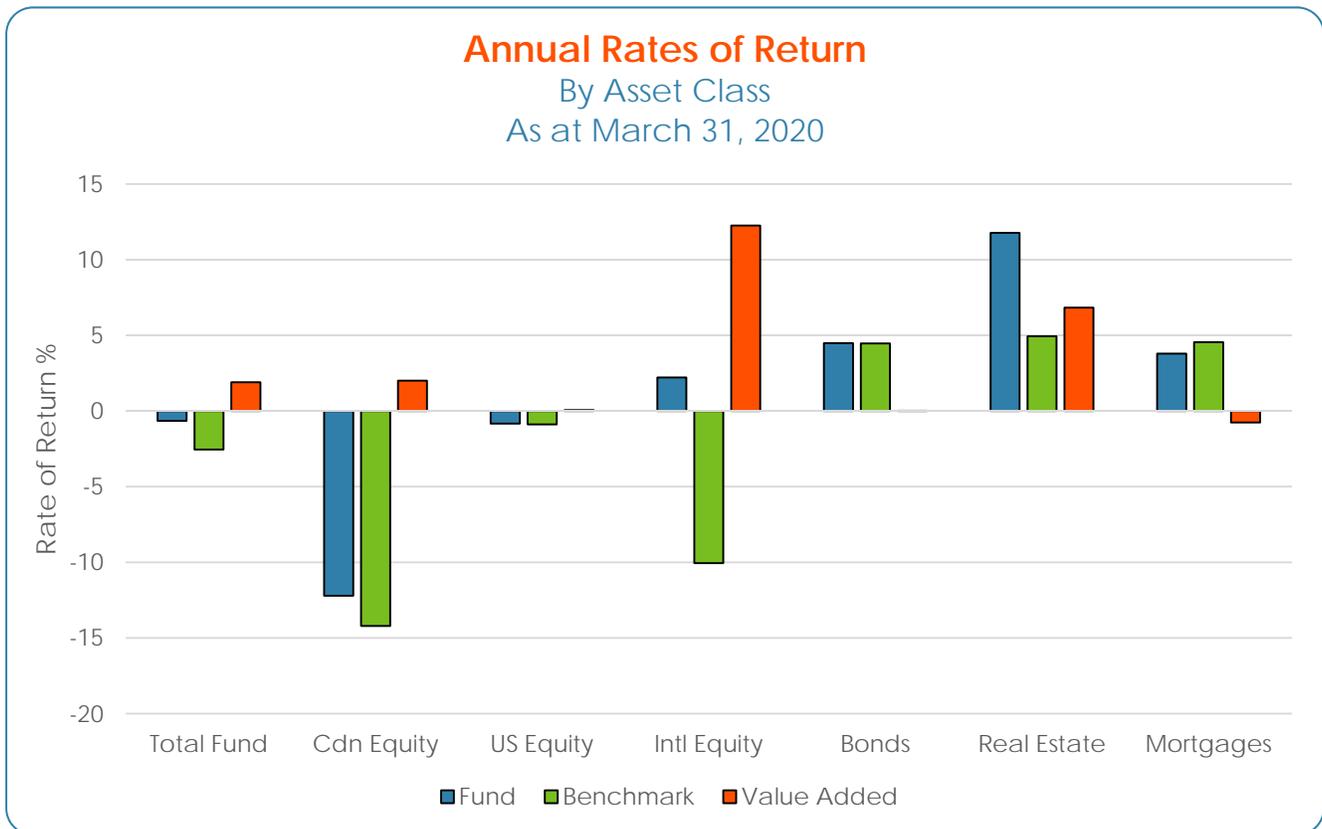
# Mandate Performance

73% of the Fund's mandates outperformed their respective benchmarks over 12 months ending March 31, 2020.

90% of the Fund's mandates with 4 year performance track records outperformed their respective benchmarks over 4 years ending March 31, 2019.

Figure 5: Asset Class Rate of Return

Annual returns by asset class for the one year period ended March 31, 2020 are shown below:



# Actuarial Valuation

An actuarial valuation of the Plan was performed as at December 31, 2019 and the results have been extrapolated to March 31, 2020 for reporting purposes. Annual valuations have been performed since 2006 as required by the provincial Office of the Superintendent of Pensions as a condition of granting a solvency funding exemption under the **Pension Benefits Act Regulations**. The current exemption is in effect until March 31, 2020.

In addition to reporting on the solvency position of the Pension Plan, an actuarial valuation is performed to determine the ability of the Pension Plan to meet its obligations or “pension promises” on a going-concern basis. It is also used to project the cost of benefits that will accrue to active plan members in the years following the valuation. The results of the extrapolation to March 31, 2020 and the December 31, 2019 valuation are highlighted in the following table together with comparative figures for an extrapolation of the Pension Plan’s financial position to March 31, 2019:

*Table 4: Actuarial Results*

| Actuarial Balance Sheet   |                                 |                   |                                    |                       |                                 |                   |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
|                           | March 31, 2020<br>(\$ Millions) |                   | December 31, 2019<br>(\$ Millions) |                       | March 31, 2019<br>(\$ Millions) |                   |
|                           | Going Concern                   | Solvency          | Going Concern <sup>1</sup>         | Solvency <sup>2</sup> | Going Concern                   | Solvency          |
| Actuarial Value of Assets | 1,680.1                         | See Note 3) below | 1,700.4                            | 1,934.9               | 1,648.1                         | See Note 3) below |
| Actuarial Liabilities     | 1,918.6                         |                   | 1,902.1                            | 2,366.3               | 1,861.8                         |                   |
| Unfunded Liability        | (238.5)                         |                   | (201.7)                            | (431.4)               | (213.7)                         |                   |

Notes:

- 1) The going concern unfunded liability, as at December 31, 2019, includes approximately \$68.4 million related to the introduction of indexing in July 2004. A financing plan is in place to amortize this portion of the unfunded liability over a remaining period of 24.5 years from December 31, 2019.
- 2) Solvency assets at December 31, 2019 include the present value of five years’ worth of going concern special payments (\$163.1 million).
- 3) An extrapolation of the solvency position was not performed as at March 31, 2020 or March 31, 2019.
- 4) The actuarial value of assets includes a fair value adjustment to “smooth” market effects over a three-year period.

## Funding

The Pension Plan is being funded in accordance with the December 31, 2018 actuarial valuation, which disclosed a going-concern deficiency of \$239.1 million. Of this amount, approximately \$73.9 million was in respect of past service costs associated with the introduction of indexing in 2004. By special provision of the **Pension Benefits Act, 1997** (PBA), the University and employees are financing the indexing liability over a remaining period of 25.5 years from December 31, 2018 through contributions equivalent to 1.2 per cent of pensionable payroll (shared equally by the University and employees). The balance, namely \$165.2 million, must be liquidated by the University through special payments of 10.7 per cent of pensionable payroll over a period of 15 years. For the fiscal years 2015-16 through 2019-20, the University was given regulatory approval to defer the required going concern special payments.

The Plan's unfunded liability is addressed as Issue Two in the Report on Performance section of this Activity Report and the status of joint sponsorship negotiations is outlined in Issue Three.

## Current Service Cost

Current service cost is the basis upon which the Plan's contribution rate for both employees and the University is determined. The December 31, 2018 actuarial valuation revealed that current service cost had increased by 0.8 percentage points over levels identified in the previous funding valuation, at December 31, 2015. Current service cost is shared equally between employees and the University and on January 1, 2020 the rate paid by each was increased by 0.4 percentage points. The Plan's contribution rate is shown below:

Table 5: Contribution Rate

| Rate Structure  | Former Contribution Rate | Current Contribution Rate |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Earnings up to Year's Basic Exemption under Canada Pension Plan   | 11.4%                    | 11.8%                     |
| Earnings between Year's Basic Exemption under Canada Pension Plan and the Year's Maximum Pensionable Earnings under Canada Pension Plan | 9.6%                     | 10.0%                     |
| Earnings above Year's Maximum Pensionable Earnings under Canada Pension Plan  | 11.4%                    | 11.8%                     |

Report On

# Performance

# 2019-20

Three primary issues and related goals and objectives as identified in the 2017-2020 Activity Plan.

### Responsible stewardship in the collection, investment and disbursement of the Fund

The Board of Regents, as trustee of the Fund, is responsible to ensure that funding objectives for the Plan are met and that contributions are invested in a prudent and timely manner. The funding objectives include an actuarially sound contribution rate, an appropriate investment strategy and a special payment stream to liquidate unfunded liabilities. The special payment stream is addressed in Issue Two. The Board must further ensure that the Plan is administered in accordance with the **Memorial University Pensions Act** and other governing legislation.

Over the past year of the Plan, the Board of Regents ensured that the funding objectives of the Plan were met and that current contributions were invested in a timely and prudent manner in accordance with all governing legislation. In doing so, they successfully achieved their objective as outlined in the 2017-2020 Activity Plan. During the period April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020 a total of \$64.5 million in contributions from the University and its employees were paid into the pension fund for investment while the plan paid out a total of \$89.0 million in benefits to eligible retired employees and their beneficiaries. Over that same period, \$7.2 million in administrative expenses were paid in addition to \$9.9 million in termination benefits. The following details the Plan's successful achievement of the indicators, and therefore the objective presented in the activity plan for the 2019-20 fiscal year.

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### Objective

By March 31, 2020, the Memorial University Pension Plan will have met its funding objectives, including the awarding of monies to eligible retired members or their principal beneficiaries<sup>1</sup> and the payment of associated administrative expenses.

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#### Indicators:

- Collected and invested contributions  
During the 2019-20 fiscal year, the Plan collected a total of \$64,529,000 in contributions, representing amounts paid by the University and its employees and funds transferred from other employers' plans. All contributions are paid into the Pension Fund for investment by external investment managers. Summary information on the Plan's investment structure and performance has been included in this Report under the "Investments" section.
- Ensured eligible retired members/principal beneficiaries<sup>1</sup> received pension benefits  
The Plan paid a total of \$89,027,000 in benefits to eligible retired employees or their beneficiaries in 2019-20.

- Paid associated administrative expenses

During 2019-20, the Plan paid a total in \$7,187,000 in administrative expenses and \$9,915,000 in termination benefits.

<sup>1</sup>The University has replaced the term "survivor" with "principal beneficiary" in Plan documentation and communications.

### Unfunded Liability

As the employer, Memorial University must comply with the pension plan funding requirements of the **Pension Benefits Act, 1997** (PBA). When the Plan experiences funding deficiencies, as measured by periodic actuarial valuations, the University must make additional special payments into the Plan. The PBA requires that going concern deficiencies be amortized over a period not greater than 15 years, while solvency deficiencies must be paid over not more than 5 years.

The University was exempt from the requirement to fund solvency deficiencies to March 31, 2020. In addition, through special provision under the PBA, the past service costs associated with the introduction of indexing in 2004 are being amortized over a remaining period of 24.25 years from March 31, 2020.

With respect to going concern funding, the University was given regulatory approval to defer the required special payments for 2015-16 through 2019-20. The deferrals were granted while the University and its employee groups continued to work toward reaching agreement on joint sponsorship of the Plan.

By the end of the 2018-19 fiscal year, a preliminary framework for joint sponsorship was developed by the University and its unionized employee groups represented by the Canadian Union of Public Employees, local 1615 (CUPE), the Newfoundland Association of Public and Private Employees (NAPE) and the Memorial University of Newfoundland Faculty Association (MUNFA). This framework included a funding policy that ensured the Plan's ongoing viability as well as measures to address the existing going concern unfunded liability. Following consultation with the Provincial Government, University stakeholders have re-visited the proposed terms of pension reform. Discussions have, however, been impacted and interrupted by global events, namely the economic downturn that occurred in early 2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic.

An actuarial valuation of the Plan was performed as at December 31, 2019. The valuation revealed a going concern unfunded liability of \$201.7 million and this includes approximately \$68.4 million in respect of indexing introduced in 2004. Under the PBA the balance of \$133.3 million must be amortized over a 15-year period with special annual payments of 11.4 per cent of pensionable payroll.

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## Objective

By March 31, 2020, Memorial University will have utilized a funding policy to guide the long term sustainability of the Pension Plan and to address the unfunded liability.

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**Indicator:** Implemented a funding policy to guide the sustainability of the Pension Plan and address future surpluses and deficits.

The University and its major unionized employee groups (CUPE, NAPE and MUNFA) reached preliminary agreement on a framework for reform of the Plan in the 2018-19 fiscal year. The draft framework included key elements of a proposed funding policy that dealt with the Plan's existing unfunded liability and provided guidelines for future funding, including rules governing the disposition of emerging deficits and sharing of future surpluses. During the 2019-20 fiscal year, discussions between the Plan stakeholders continued following consultation with the Provincial Government. These discussions were, however, suspended as a result of measures taken provincially due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a result, Memorial University did not meet the objective of utilizing a funding policy to guide the long term sustainability of the Plan and to address the unfunded liability as set out in the 2017-2020 Activity Plan. The University will continue to work with Plan stakeholders, including the Provincial Government, toward finalizing the process of structural change for the Plan and the implementation of a funding policy in the next fiscal year.

With respect to the portion of the unfunded liability related to indexing, this is being financed by ongoing contributions from the University and employees at a combined rate of 1.2 per cent of pensionable payroll. It is proposed that this financing arrangement will continue under a jointly sponsored pension plan.

### Joint Sponsorship

Within the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, other large public sector pension plans have undergone a transformational pension reform process which has culminated in the establishment of shared responsibility for pension plan management and funding.

In consideration of the Plan's status as a public sector pension plan and in recognition of its funding challenges, the Provincial Government has requested that the University and Pension Plan stakeholders also move to establish joint sponsorship of the Plan and formulate a funding policy to guide its future sustainability. Under this structure, the Plan would be jointly sponsored by the University and employee groups and the sponsors will share equally in the Plan's management and funding.

During the fiscal year 2019-20, the University and its major unionized employee groups (CUPE, NAPE, and MUNFA) continued their work, in consultation with the Provincial Government, towards reaching agreement on a framework for Pension Plan reform. Discussions were suspended, however, due to the onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic and related economic disruption.

---

### Objective

By March 31, 2020, the Memorial University Pension Plan will have transitioned to a jointly sponsored pension plan.

---

**Indicators:** Continued negotiations with employee groups toward the development of a joint sponsorship agreement for the future management and funding of the Pension Plan.

Signed reform agreement.

Signed joint sponsorship agreement.

Due to the impact of global economic events and the COVID-19 pandemic, Memorial University did not meet the objective of transitioning to a jointly sponsored pension plan by March 31, 2020. Discussions on joint sponsorship of the Pension Plan will resume in 2020-21 with employee groups, in consultation with the Provincial Government.

# Highlights and Partnerships

## Financial Highlights

Selected financial highlights for the Plan are shown in the table below. More detailed information can be found in the audited financial statements beginning on page 29 of this report.

Table 6: Financial Highlights

|                                     | March 31      |               |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
|                                     | 2020          | 2019          |
| Net Assets Available for Benefits * | 1,616,811,000 | 1,667,740,000 |
| One-Year Annual Rate of Return      | -0.65%        | 8.13%         |
| Realized Investment Income          | 92,932,000    | 107,373,000   |
| Pensions Paid**                     | 85,156,000    | 78,559,000    |
| Current Contributions: Employee     | 29,477,000    | 29,818,000    |
| University                          | 29,477,000    | 29,818,000    |
| Buyback Contributions: Employee     | 1,759         | 3,659         |
| University                          | 100           | 130           |
| University special payments:        |               |               |
| Going Concern                       | Nil           | Nil           |
| Solvency deficit                    | 3,716,000     | 2,445,000     |
| (refunds)                           |               |               |

\* Net assets available for benefits is reported at fair value and does not include the actuarial smoothing adjustment. Refer to note 6 of the accompanying financial statements for further information.

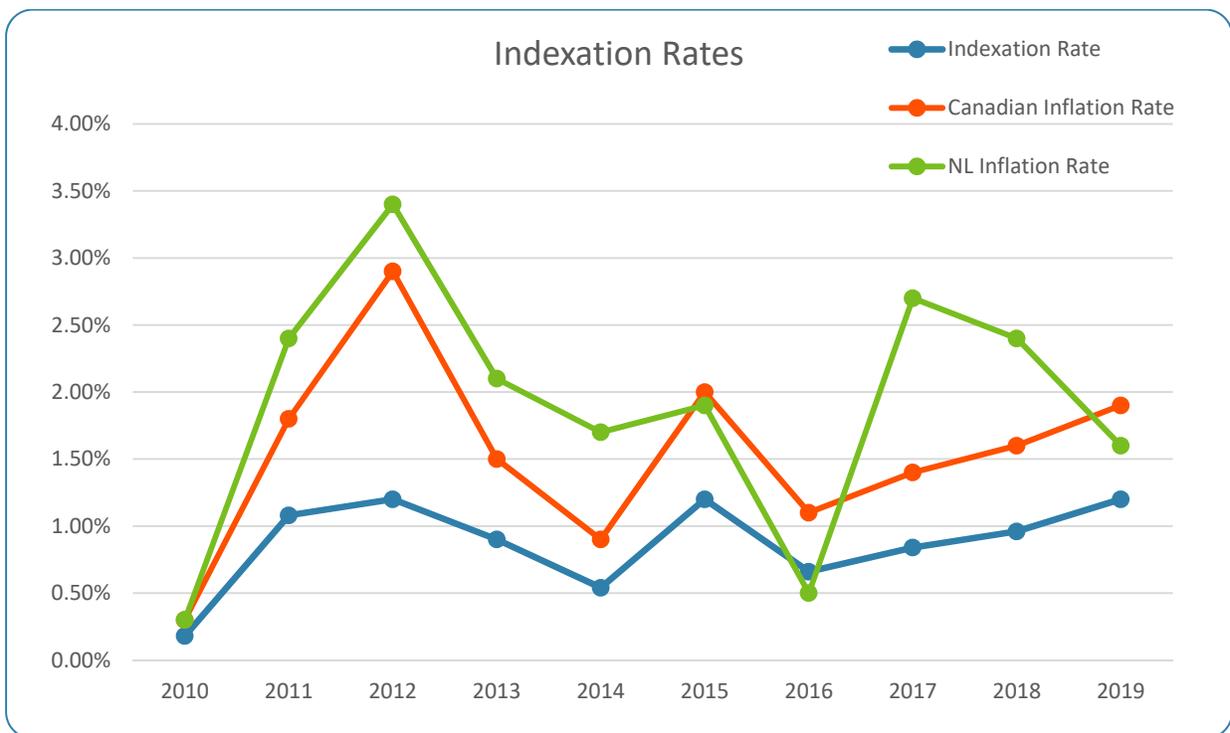
\*\* Not inclusive of death benefits or refunds.

# Pension Indexing

On July 1, 2019, 1,680 retirees and principal beneficiaries received a 0.96 per cent indexing adjustment to their pensions. Indexing was introduced under the Plan in July 2004, with yearly adjustments calculated as 60 per cent of the annual change in the consumer price index, as measured by Statistics Canada, to a maximum yearly increase of 1.14 per cent.

Figure 6: Indexation Rates

Indexation rates from 2010 to 2019 are showing in the chart below:



Average Indexation Rate:  
**0.88%**  
For the 10-year period from 2010 to 2019.

## Membership Movement and Distribution

Throughout the fiscal year the Plan's participant distribution will inevitably change (e.g, retirements, new hires). Movement within the 2019-20 fiscal year is shown below:

Table 7: Membership Movement

| Membership Group        | March 31, 2020 | April 1, 2019 |
|-------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Actives                 | 3,621          | 3,643         |
| Retirees                | 2,140          | 2,086         |
| Principal Beneficiaries | 324            | 276           |
| Deferred                | 282            | 303           |

## Retirement Planning Seminars

To help Memorial employees plan for their retirement, full-day retirement planning seminars are held annually. With almost 1,000 employees eligible for unreduced retirement by 2020, this year's seminars had approximately 194 participants at the St. John's campus and another 15 at the Grenfell campus. The seminar was open



to employees and their spouses and was attended by those who anticipate retiring in the next few years and those who are planning ahead for retirement in the years to come. During the seminar, participants learned about the University's pension and post-retirement benefits, the Canada Pension Plan and Old Age Security Benefits. Presentations were also provided by a representative of Memorial University of Newfoundland Pensioners' Association (MUNPA)

and from a financial planning and consulting firm. The University also provides pension information sessions upon request from individual departments.

## Actuarial Valuation and Financial Position

A full valuation of the Plan was performed at December 31, 2019 and extrapolated to March 31, 2020 for financial reporting purposes. The results of this valuation are reported upon in an earlier section.

The Plan's unfunded liability increased over the prior year due primarily to quarter four investment losses brought on by the global economic downturn caused by declining world oil prices and the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, a reduction in the Plan's actuarial discount rate from 5.8% to 5.6% resulted in a proportionate increase in liabilities. Despite sizeable experience gains realized on other economic and demographic assumptions the unfunded liability grew by \$107.8 million at March 31, 2020, measured on a market value basis.

Table 8: Financial Position

|                            | March 31       |                |                |                |                |
|----------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|                            | 2020<br>(000s) | 2019<br>(000s) | 2018<br>(000s) | 2017<br>(000s) | 2016<br>(000s) |
| Net Assets at Market Value | 1,616,811      | 1,667,740      | 1,569,748      | 1,500,468      | 1,358,381      |
| Pension Obligations        | 1,918,674      | 1,861,829      | 1,798,415      | 1,736,599      | 1,657,148      |
| Deficit                    | 301,863        | 194,089        | 228,667        | 236,131        | 298,767        |
| Funded Ratio               | 84%            | 90%            | 87%            | 86%            | 82%            |

- Results of December 31 valuations are extrapolated to March 31 for financial reporting.
- Financial positions and funded ratios are reported at market value as per Pension Plan financial statements and do not reflect asset "smoothing" adjustments contained in actuarial valuation reports.

# Opportunities and Challenges Ahead

## Opportunities

The following area of opportunity has been identified for 2020-21:

- Adoption of a remote service delivery model to meet the needs of employees and retirees during the pandemic;

## Challenges

The following challenges have been identified for 2020-21:

- Monitoring and assessment of the performance of investment fund managers and review of the Statement of Investment Policy and Objectives;
- Completion of an asset liability review for the pension plan and investment fund;
- Development of a funding strategy to address the unfunded liability;
- Continued negotiation with employee groups on reaching agreement on joint sponsorship of the Plan and development of a future oriented funding policy and governance model.

# Conclusion

The 2019-20 fiscal year was a challenging one for the Plan. Despite the optimism generated by investment markets during the first three quarters, the Plan ended the year having lost significant value due to the unprecedented economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Pandemic response measures also dampened progress on movement toward joint sponsorship of the Plan by the University and its employees. Discussions on Pension Plan reform are expected to resume during the 2020-21 fiscal year.

The Board, through the work of the University administration and stakeholder groups, will continue its efforts to ensure that funding and governance goals are achieved and that the Plan remains competitive and affordable for its constituent groups.

With respect to the objectives set out in the Board of Regents' three-year activity plan intended to guide the Plan for the fiscal years 2017-18 to 2019-20, the University met the funding objective relative to the collection, investment, and disbursement of the fund.

Due to the status of joint sponsorship discussions, the objectives related to the unfunded liability and joint sponsorship have not been met. The University anticipates that these objectives will be met once discussions with employee groups resume in consultation with the Provincial Government.



Financial Statements  
**Memorial University of Newfoundland**  
**Pension Plan**

March 31, 2020

## INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Board of Regents of  
**Memorial University of Newfoundland**

### **Opinion**

We have audited the financial statements of **Memorial University of Newfoundland Pension Plan** [the “Plan”] which comprise the consolidated statement of financial position as at March 31, 2020, and the consolidated statement of operations, re-measurement gains and losses, changes in net deficiency and cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the University as at March 31, 2020, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.

### **Basis for opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements* section of our report. We are independent of the University in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

### **Responsibilities of management and individual charged with governance for the financial statements**

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the University's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the University or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Individuals charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the University's financial reporting process.

## **Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the University's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the University's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the University to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
- Obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the financial information of the entities or business activities within the consolidated entity to express an opinion on the consolidated financial statements. We are responsible for the direction, supervision and performance of the audit. We remain solely responsible for our audit opinion.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

St. John's, Canada  
October 16, 2020

*Ernst & Young LLP*  
Chartered Professional Accountants

## Memorial University of Newfoundland Pension Plan

### STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As at March 31

[thousands of dollars]

|  | <u>2020</u>             | <u>2019</u>             |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>ASSETS</b>  |                         |                         |
| <b>Receivables</b>   |                         |                         |
| Contributions receivable                                     | 818                     | 590                     |
| Accrued interest and dividends                               | 2,774                   | 2,807                   |
| Amounts due from pending trades                              | 9,558                   | 2,554                   |
| Due from Memorial University of Newfoundland <i>[note 4]</i> | <u>3,772</u>            | <u>3,427</u>            |
|  | <b>16,922</b>           | <b>9,378</b>            |
| <b>Investments <i>[notes 5 &amp; 10]</i></b>                 |                         |                         |
| Cash and short-term investments                              | 37,103                  | 44,047                  |
| Bonds and debentures   | 432,761                 | 408,096                 |
| Equities   | 871,061                 | 949,312                 |
| Real estate  | 140,057                 | 138,448                 |
| Mortgages  | <u>131,550</u>          | <u>126,483</u>          |
|  | <b>1,612,532</b>        | <b>1,666,386</b>        |
| <b>Intangible assets <i>[note 9]</i></b>                     | <u>131</u>              | <u>175</u>              |
| <b>Total assets</b>  | <b><u>1,629,585</u></b> | <b><u>1,675,939</u></b> |
| <b>LIABILITIES</b>   |                         |                         |
| Accounts payable and accrued expenses                        | 1,629                   | 1,418                   |
| Accrued pension refunds                                      | 4,377                   | 3,500                   |
| Amounts payable from pending trades                          | <u>6,768</u>            | <u>3,281</u>            |
| <b>Total liabilities</b>                                     | <b><u>12,774</u></b>    | <b><u>8,199</u></b>     |
| <b>Net assets available for benefits</b>                     | <b>1,616,811</b>        | <b>1,667,740</b>        |
| Pension obligations  | <u>(1,918,674)</u>      | <u>(1,861,829)</u>      |
| <b>Deficit</b>   | <b><u>(301,863)</u></b> | <b><u>(194,089)</u></b> |

*See accompanying notes*

On behalf of the Board:



Chair of the Board of Regents



Chair of the Finance Committee

Memorial University of Newfoundland Pension Plan

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS  
AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS**

Year ended March 31  
[thousands of dollars]

|   | <u>2020</u>      | <u>2019</u>      |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| <b>INCREASE IN ASSETS</b>                                       |                  |                  |
| <b>Investment income</b>  |                  |                  |
| Interest income   | 22,959           | 17,333           |
| Dividend income   | 23,142           | 21,779           |
| Current-period increase (decrease) in fair value of investments | (102,261)        | 18,896           |
| Realized gain on sale of investments                            | 46,831           | 68,261           |
|   | <u>(9,329)</u>   | <u>126,269</u>   |
| <b>Contributions [note 7]</b>                                   |                  |                  |
| Employee - current service                                      | 29,477           | 29,818           |
| - past service  | 1,759            | 3,659            |
| Employer - current service                                      | 29,477           | 29,818           |
| - past service  | 100              | 130              |
| - special payments  | 3,716            | 2,445            |
|   | <u>64,529</u>    | <u>65,870</u>    |
| <b>Total increase in assets</b>                                 | <u>55,200</u>    | <u>192,139</u>   |
| <b>DECREASE IN ASSETS</b>                                       |                  |                  |
| Benefits paid   | 85,156           | 78,559           |
| Refunds of contributions  | 9,915            | 5,795            |
| Death benefits  | 3,871            | 3,050            |
| Administrative expenses [note 8]                                | 7,187            | 6,743            |
| <b>Total decrease in assets</b>                                 | <u>106,129</u>   | <u>94,147</u>    |
| <b>Decrease in net assets</b>                                   | <u>(50,929)</u>  | <u>97,992</u>    |
| Net assets available for benefits, beginning of year            | <u>1,667,740</u> | <u>1,569,748</u> |
| <b>Net assets available for benefits, end of year</b>           | <u>1,616,811</u> | <u>1,667,740</u> |

See accompanying notes

## Memorial University of Newfoundland Pension Plan

### STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN PENSION OBLIGATIONS

Year ended March 31  
[thousands of dollars]

|  | <u>2020</u>             | <u>2019</u>      |
|--|-------------------------|------------------|
| Actuarial present value of accrued pension benefits,<br>beginning of year            | <b>1,861,829</b>        | 1,798,415        |
| Experience gains   | <b>(24,482)</b>         | (15,578)         |
| Changes in actuarial assumptions/methodology   | <b>14,701</b>           | -                |
| Interest accrued on benefits   | <b>106,892</b>          | 104,486          |
| Benefits accrued   | <b>58,676</b>           | 61,910           |
| Benefits paid, death benefits and refunds of contributions                           | <b>(98,942)</b>         | (87,404)         |
| <b>Actuarial present value of accrued pension benefits,<br/>end of year [note 6]</b> | <b><u>1,918,674</u></b> | <u>1,861,829</u> |

*See accompanying notes*

## Memorial University of Newfoundland Pension Plan

### NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

March 31, 2020

[tabular amounts in thousands of dollars]

#### 1. DESCRIPTION OF PLAN

The following description of the Memorial University of Newfoundland Pension Plan [the “Plan”] is a summary only. For more complete information, reference should be made to the *Memorial University Pensions Act (the “Act”)*.

##### General

The Plan is a contributory defined benefit pension plan covering eligible employees of Memorial University of Newfoundland [the “University”] in accordance with the Act.

Where differences exist between the provisions of the Act and the Newfoundland *Pensions Benefits Act, 1997* [the “PBA”], the minimum standards prescribed by the PBA will prevail unless the Plan provisions exceed these standards.

##### Funding policy

The Plan is subject to the funding provisions of section 35 of the PBA and section 12 of the PBA Regulations which require that the employer contribute an amount equal to the normal actuarial cost allocated to the employer in the most recently filed actuarial valuation. In addition, where the Plan experiences a solvency deficiency, the employer is required to contribute an amount sufficient to liquidate the solvency deficiency within five years of the solvency valuation date. Likewise, going concern unfunded liabilities are required to be liquidated by the employer over a period not exceeding 15 years.

##### Provincial guarantee

The Plan is being underwritten by the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Section 6 of the Act states:

All pensions, payments, and refunds and all expenses of the administration of this Act are a charge upon and payable out of the fund and if at any time there is not sufficient money at the credit of the fund for those purposes as they fall due for payment the Minister of Finance shall pay to the board an amount to cover the deficiency, and the board shall deposit that amount to the fund.

##### Service pensions

A service pension is available based on the number of years of service times two percent of the best five-year average pensionable salary. Pensions are indexed from age 65 at the rate of 60% of the annual change in the Consumer Price Index, as measured by Statistics Canada, to a maximum annual increase of 1.2%.

## Memorial University of Newfoundland Pension Plan

### NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

March 31, 2020

[tabular amounts in thousands of dollars]

#### Survivors' pensions

A survivor pension is paid to a surviving principal beneficiary or dependent child, as defined in the Act, of a member who has a minimum of two years' credited service.

#### Death refunds

A death refund is payable to the estate of a pensioner or survivor where such pensions have not been paid to the full extent of the individual's contributions plus interest. In a similar manner, a death refund is payable to the estate of a contributor where no survivor pension is paid. A death refund may also be paid to a surviving principal beneficiary who elects to transfer the commuted value of their survivor pension from the Plan where the death of a contributor precedes the commencement of their pension.

#### Refunds

Upon application and subject to locking-in provisions, a terminated employee may withdraw their contributions and accumulated interest.

#### Income taxes

The Plan is a Registered Pension Trust as defined in the *Income Tax Act* and is not subject to income taxes.

### 2. BASIS OF PRESENTATION

These financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis as set out in Section 4600, Pension Plans, in Part IV of the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada ["CPA Canada"] Accounting Handbook. These financial statements present the information of the Plan as a separate reporting entity independent of the sponsor and participants of the Plan.

### 3. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

#### Use of estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for pension plans requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the year. Actual results could differ from these estimates. These estimates are reviewed periodically and, as adjustments become necessary, they are reported in earnings in the period during which they become

## Memorial University of Newfoundland Pension Plan

### NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

March 31, 2020

[tabular amounts in thousands of dollars]

known. Areas of key estimation include the actuarial assumptions for the determination of the pension obligations [see note 6] and the fair value of investments [see note 10].

#### **Investments**

Investments are stated at fair value and transactions are recorded as of the trade date. Fair value is the amount of consideration that would be agreed upon in an arm's length transaction between knowledgeable willing parties who are under no compulsion to act. In determining fair value, adjustments have not been made for transaction costs as they are not considered to be significant. The change in the difference between the fair value and cost of investments, at the beginning and end of each fiscal year, is reflected in the statement of changes in net assets available for benefits as current-period change in fair value of investments.

Fair value of investments is determined as follows:

Bonds, debentures and equities are valued at year-end quoted market prices where available. Where quoted prices are not available, estimated fair value is calculated using comparable securities. In the case of bonds and debentures, fair value measurement is based upon the bid price whereas equities are valued at the mid-point of the bid-ask spread.

Short-term notes, treasury bills and term deposits maturing within a year are valued at amortized cost, which, together with accrued interest income, approximates fair value given the short-term nature of these instruments.

Guaranteed investment certificates and term deposits maturing after one year are valued at fair value determined as the present value of estimated future cash flows discounted at interest rates in effect on the last business day of the year for investments of a similar type, quality, and maturity.

Pooled fund investments are valued at the unit value supplied by the pooled fund administrator, which represents the Plan's proportionate share of underlying net assets at fair value determined using closing market prices.

The investment in real estate is comprised of units in both a closed-end real estate fund and an open-end real estate fund. The fair value of properties in both funds is determined at least annually by independent accredited appraisers. New acquisitions are carried at cost for the first 12 months. Due to prevailing market conditions, precipitated by the existing global pandemic, real estate appraisals are subject to material valuation uncertainty at March 31, 2020.

#### **Investment income**

Investment income, which is recorded on the accrual basis, includes realized gains (losses) on the sale of investments, interest income, dividends and unrealized changes in fair value.

## **Memorial University of Newfoundland Pension Plan**

### **NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

March 31, 2020

[tabular amounts in thousands of dollars]

#### **Realized gain on sale of investments**

The realized gain on the sale of investments is the difference between proceeds received and the average cost of investments sold.

#### **Recognition of contributions and benefits**

Contributions and benefits are recognized on the accrual basis of accounting.

All current service and required contributions from the University and Plan participants, respectively, are reflected in the year of the Plan participant's earnings.

#### **Foreign currency translation**

The fair value of foreign currency denominated investments, included in the statement of net assets available for benefits, is translated into Canadian dollars at year-end rates of exchange. Gains and losses arising from translations are included in the current-period increase in fair value of investments.

Foreign currency denominated transactions including cost amounts, are translated into Canadian dollars at the rates of exchange in effect on the dates of the related transactions.

#### **Intangible assets**

Intangible assets are amortized on the basis of their estimated useful lives using the straight line method and the following duration:

Software 10 years

#### **Fair value of financial instruments**

Investment assets and liabilities are measured at fair value as disclosed elsewhere in these financial statements. Other assets and liabilities do not have significant fair value risk as they are all due within twelve months.

#### **4. DUE FROM MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY OF NEWFOUNDLAND**

The treasury function of the Plan is administered by the University and, therefore, the Due from Memorial University of Newfoundland account represents funds owed to the Plan by the University.

## Memorial University of Newfoundland Pension Plan

### NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

March 31, 2020

[tabular amounts in thousands of dollars]

#### 5. INVESTMENTS

[a] The following table summarizes investments at fair value:

|                                 | <u>2020</u>      | <u>2019</u> |
|---------------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| Cash and short-term investments | <u>37,103</u>    | 44,047      |
| Canadian bonds and debentures:  |                  |             |
| Federal                         | 65,353           | 71,685      |
| Provincial                      | 70,784           | 60,982      |
| Corporate                       | 93,891           | 81,209      |
| Pooled funds                    | <u>202,733</u>   | 194,220     |
|                                 | <u>432,761</u>   | 408,096     |
| Canadian equities:              |                  |             |
| Common stock                    | 271,408          | 319,687     |
| Pooled funds                    | <u>100,537</u>   | 115,437     |
|                                 | <u>371,945</u>   | 435,124     |
| Foreign equities:               |                  |             |
| Common stock                    | 315,777          | 334,795     |
| Pooled funds                    | <u>183,339</u>   | 179,393     |
|                                 | <u>499,116</u>   | 514,188     |
| Total equities                  | <u>871,061</u>   | 949,312     |
| Canadian Real estate            | <u>140,057</u>   | 138,448     |
| Canadian Mortgages              | <u>131,550</u>   | 126,483     |
|                                 | <u>1,612,532</u> | 1,666,386   |

[b] Realized losses arising from foreign currency translation amounted to \$341,462 for the year ended March 31, 2020 [2019 – loss of \$64,611]. For financial statement presentation purposes, these amounts have been included in realized gain on sale of investments.

## Memorial University of Newfoundland Pension Plan

### NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

March 31, 2020

[tabular amounts in thousands of dollars]

#### 6. OBLIGATION FOR PENSION BENEFITS

The present value of accrued pension benefits was determined using the projected benefits method prorated on service and the administrator's best estimate assumptions. The Actuary, Eckler Limited, performed an actuarial valuation as at December 31, 2019, and extrapolated the results to March 31, 2020.

The actuarial present value of benefits as at March 31, 2020, was estimated to be \$1,918,674 [2019 – \$1,861,829]. The statement of changes in pension obligations outlines the principal components of change in actuarial present value from one year to the next.

The assumptions used in determining the actuarial value of accrued pension benefits were developed by reference to expected long-term market conditions. Significant long-term actuarial assumptions used in the December 31, 2019, valuation were:

| <b>Discount rate</b>                        | <b>Salary escalation rate</b> |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 5.6% [2018 – 5.8%] pre- and post-retirement | 3.75% [2018 – 4.0%] per annum |

The actuarial value of net assets available for benefits has been determined at amounts that reflect long-term market trends [consistent with assumptions underlying the valuation of the accrued pension benefits]. The fair value is the underlying basis and incorporates an investment reserve calculated as the unamortized difference between expected and actual investment returns over a period of three years.

The actuarial asset values used in the extrapolations for 2020 and 2019 were as follows:

|   | <u>2020</u>             | <u>2019</u>      |
|---|-------------------------|------------------|
| Net assets available for benefits                                 | <b>1,616,811</b>        | 1,667,740        |
| Actuarial value changes not reflected in fair value of net assets | <b>63,370</b>           | (19,677)         |
| Actuarial value of net assets available for benefits              | <b><u>1,680,181</u></b> | <u>1,648,063</u> |

## Memorial University of Newfoundland Pension Plan

### NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

March 31, 2020

[tabular amounts in thousands of dollars]

#### 7. FUNDING POLICY

Pursuant to the Act, employees are required to contribute to the Plan in accordance with the following schedule:

- 11.8% of pensionable earnings up to the Year's Basic Exemption ["YBE"] under the *Canada Pension Plan Act*;
- 10.0% of pensionable earnings above the YBE up to and including the Year's Maximum Pensionable Earnings ["YMPE"] under the *Canada Pension Plan Act*;
- 11.8% of pensionable earnings above the YMPE.

The University is required to contribute an amount equal to the contributions paid by employees and any additional amounts required to be paid by an employer under the PBA. For the period April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2020, the University was exempt from the going concern funding requirements of the PBA thereby allowing deferral of the special payments otherwise due for the fiscal years 2015/16 through 2019/20.

With respect to solvency, the University is exempt to March 31, 2020, from the PBA requirement to liquidate solvency deficiencies within five years of the solvency valuation date. Where the solvency ratio is below prescribed limits the University will, however, make special payments into the fund representing the solvency deficiency on refunds and transfers paid out of the fund.

A valuation of the Plan was performed as at December 31, 2019 and the results have been extrapolated to March 31, 2020, for financial statement reporting. The extrapolation revealed that the going concern unfunded liability is \$238.5 million at March 31, 2020, based on current Plan provisions and PBA requirements. A portion of the unfunded liability relates to the past service cost of indexing, introduced under the Plan, effective July 1, 2004. A funding arrangement was implemented coincident with the introduction of indexing to liquidate this unfunded liability over a period of 40 years. At March 31, 2020, approximately 24.25 years are remaining in the amortization schedule. The indexing liability is amortized on a declining balance basis along with recognition that if the indexing contributions (i.e., an additional 0.6% of payroll being made by both the University and Employees) exceed the originally scheduled amortization payment, then 15 years' worth of these excess contributions can be accounted for when determining the University's special payments.

The December 31, 2019, actuarial valuation disclosed a going concern unfunded liability of \$201.7 million. The University is required to make special payments to amortize the unfunded liability over a period of not more than 15 years. The portion of the going concern unfunded liability (after accounting for the indexing liability) to be amortized was \$133.3 million and the required amortization payment for fiscal 2020/2021 is \$34.5 million [or 11.4% of pensionable payroll]. The Plan is being funded in accordance with the December 31 2018 actuarial valuation. The next actuarial valuation for funding is due no later than December 31, 2021 [i.e., within three years of the December 31, 2018, actuarial valuation].

## Memorial University of Newfoundland Pension Plan

### NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

March 31, 2020

[tabular amounts in thousands of dollars]

#### 8. ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES

Administrative expenses are paid by the University on behalf of the Plan. The Plan then reimburses the University on a monthly basis. A detailed breakdown of these expenses is as follows:

|                            | <u>2020</u>  | <u>2019</u>  |
|----------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Administrative expenses:   |              |              |
| Actuarial fees             | 261          | 177          |
| Administrative Services    | 294          | 283          |
| Audit fees                 | 13           | 12           |
| Custodial fees             | 346          | 375          |
| Investment management fees | 5,773        | 5,378        |
| Salaries and benefits      | 443          | 461          |
| Amortization               | 44           | 44           |
| Other fees                 | 13           | 13           |
|                            | <u>7,187</u> | <u>6,743</u> |

#### 9. INTANGIBLE ASSETS

|          | <u>2020</u> |                             |                   | <u>2019</u> |                             |                   |
|----------|-------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
|          | Cost        | Accumulated<br>Amortization | Net Book<br>Value | Cost        | Accumulated<br>Amortization | Net book<br>Value |
| Software | 437         | 306                         | 131               | 437         | 262                         | 175               |

## Memorial University of Newfoundland Pension Plan

### NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

March 31, 2020

[tabular amounts in thousands of dollars]

#### 10. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS, FINANCIAL RISKS AND RISK MANAGEMENT

The fair value of investments is as described in notes 3 and 5[a]. The fair value of other financial assets and liabilities, namely contributions receivable, accrued interest and dividends, due from Memorial University of Newfoundland, accounts payable and accrued expenses, and accrued pension refunds are measured at amortized cost. The fair value of amounts due from pending trades and amounts payable from pending trades is represented by the fair value of the underlying securities.

##### Fair value hierarchy

|                               | 2020             | 2019      |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-----------|
| <b>Level 1</b>                |                  |           |
| Cash & short term investments | 37,103           | 44,047    |
| Equities                      | 587,185          | 654,482   |
|                               | <b>624,288</b>   | 698,529   |
| <b>Level 2</b>                |                  |           |
| Equities – Pooled Funds       | 283,876          | 294,830   |
| Bonds & debentures            | 432,761          | 408,096   |
| Mortgages                     | 131,550          | 126,483   |
|                               | <b>848,187</b>   | 829,409   |
| <b>Level 3</b>                |                  |           |
| Real estate                   | 140,057          | 138,448   |
|                               | <b>1,612,532</b> | 1,666,386 |

Financial instruments measured at fair value are classified according to a fair value hierarchy that reflects the importance of the data used to perform each valuation. The fair value hierarchy is made up of the following levels:

Level 1- valuation based on quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities;

Level 2- valuation techniques based on inputs other than quoted prices included in Level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability and derived, either directly as prices or indirectly from prices;

Level 3- valuation techniques using inputs for the asset or liability that are not based on observable market data (unobservable inputs).

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The fair value hierarchy requires the use of observable data on the market each time such data exists. A financial instrument is classified at the lowest level of hierarchy for which significant input has been considered in measuring fair value. There have been no significant transfers between Levels for all reporting periods presented.

The following table summarizes the changes in the fair value of financial instruments classified in Level 3 for the year ended March 31:

#### Level 3

|                               | 2020     | 2019    |
|-------------------------------|----------|---------|
| <b>Real estate</b>            |          |         |
| Balance at beginning of year  | 138,448  | 128,995 |
| Net purchases                 | 19,514   | 670     |
| Net Dispositions              | (31,673) | (837)   |
| Net dividends earned          | 2,366    | 2,559   |
| Net dividends transferred out | (2,319)  | (2,430) |
| Net realized gains            | 5,390    | 53      |
| Net unrealized gains          | 8,377    | 9,567   |
| Administrative expenses       | (46)     | (129)   |
|                               | 140,057  | 138,448 |

Fair values of investments are exposed to price risk, liquidity risk and credit risk.

#### Price risk

Price risk is comprised of currency risk, interest rate risk, and market risk.

[a] **Currency risk:** Currency risk relates to the possibility that the investments will change in value due to future fluctuations in the U.S., Euro, and other international foreign exchange rates. For example, a 5% strengthening of the Canadian dollar against the U.S. dollar at March 31, 2020, would have decreased the U.S. investment value by approximately \$17,500,000. Conversely, a 5% weakening of the Canadian dollar against the U.S. dollar at March 31, 2020, would have increased the U.S. investment value by approximately \$17,500,000.

A 5% strengthening of the Canadian dollar against the U.K. Pound at March 31, 2020, would have decreased the U.K. investment value by approximately \$1,350,000. Conversely, a 5% weakening of the Canadian dollar against the U.K. Pound at March 31, 2020, would have increased the U.K. investment value by approximately \$1,350,000.

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A 5% strengthening of the Canadian dollar against the Euro at March 31, 2020, would have decreased the European investment value by approximately \$2,450,000. Conversely, a 5% weakening of the Canadian dollar against the Euro at March 31, 2020, would have increased the European investment value by approximately \$2,450,000.

A 5% strengthening of the Canadian dollar against the Swiss Franc at March 31, 2020, would have decreased the Swiss investment value by approximately \$1,000,000. Conversely, a 5% weakening of the Canadian dollar against the Swiss Franc at March 31, 2020, would have increased the Swiss investment value by approximately \$1,000,000.

- [b] **Interest rate risk:** Interest rate risk relates to the possibility that the investments will change in value due to future fluctuations in market interest rates, thereby impacting pension liabilities which are exposed to longer-term fixed-income instruments. Duration is an appropriate measure of interest rate risk for fixed-income funds as a rise in interest rates will cause a decrease in bond prices: the longer the duration, the greater the effect. At March 31, 2020, the average duration of the bond portfolio was 7.5 years. Therefore, if interest rates were to increase by 1%, the value of the bond portfolio would drop by 7.5%.

|                                       | Within<br>1-year | 1-5<br>years  | 5-10 years    | Over<br>10<br>years | No specific<br>maturity | Total          |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| Cash and<br>short-term<br>investments | 37,103           | —             | —             | —                   | —                       | <b>37,103</b>  |
| Bonds and debentures                  |                  |               |               |                     |                         |                |
| Federal                               | 10,447           | 3,349         | 13,333        | 5,944               | —                       | <b>33,073</b>  |
| Provincial                            | —                | 9,720         | 14,665        | 45,677              | —                       | <b>70,062</b>  |
| Corporate                             | 13,796           | 80,363        | 17,509        | 15,225              | —                       | <b>126,893</b> |
| Pooled funds                          | —                | —             | —             | —                   | 202,733                 | <b>202,733</b> |
| Total bonds and debentures            | 24,243           | 93,432        | 45,507        | 66,846              | 202,733                 | <b>432,761</b> |
| Total fixed income                    | <b>61,346</b>    | <b>93,432</b> | <b>45,507</b> | <b>66,846</b>       | <b>202,733</b>          | <b>469,864</b> |

- [c] **Market risk:** Market risk relates to the possibility that the investments will change in value due to future fluctuations in market prices. This risk is reduced by the Plan's investment policy which incorporates diversification of the investment portfolio across various asset classes and within each asset class. Equity price risk is managed by investing in Canadian, U.S. and international equities through the use of five external investment managers utilizing differing

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investment styles. The equity portfolio is diversified across a range of economic sectors and companies and is limited to stocks traded on recognized stock exchanges.

Fixed-income market risk is managed by diversifying across various government and corporate issuers and by maintaining minimum quality ratings of “A” as determined by recognized bond rating agencies. The minimum quality rating for the pooled index bond fund is “BBB”.

Price risk can be measured in terms of volatility, i.e., the standard deviation of change in the value of a financial instrument within a specific time horizon. Based on the volatility of the Plan’s current asset class holdings shown below, the expectation is that over the long term (15 years), the Plan will return approximately 5.3%, with a 95% probability of the 15 year annualized return falling within the range of 1.0% to 8.8%.

| <b>Asset class</b>              | <b><u>Estimated<br/>volatility %</u></b> |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Canadian equities               | +/- 17.60                                |
| U.S. equities                   | +/- 17.00                                |
| International equities          | +/- 18.20                                |
| Real estate                     | +/- 8.20                                 |
| Mortgages                       | +/- 3.60                                 |
| Cash and short-term investments | +/- 1.40                                 |
| Canadian bonds and debentures   | <u>+/- 3.90</u>                          |

| <b>Held-for-trading securities</b> | <b><u>Market value at<br/>March 31, 2020</u></b> | <b><u>Investments %</u></b> |
|------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| Cash and short-term investments    | 37,103   | 2.3                         |
| Canadian bonds and debentures      | 432,761  | 26.8                        |
| Canadian equities                  | 370,426  | 23.0                        |
| U.S. equities                      | 317,296  | 19.7                        |
| International equities             | 183,339  | 11.4                        |
| Canadian real estate               | 140,057  | 8.7                         |
| Canadian mortgages                 | 131,550  | 8.1                         |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b><u>1,612,532</u></b>                          | <b><u>100.0</u></b>         |

| <b>Benchmark for investments</b> | <b><u>% change</u></b> | <b><u>Net impact on<br/>market value</u></b> |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|--|
| S&P/TSX Composite Index          | +/- 17.60              | +/- 65,195                                   |

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|                                   |           |            |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| S&P 500 C\$                       | +/- 17.00 | +/- 59,278 |
| MSCI EAFE C\$                     | +/- 18.20 | +/- 33,368 |
| CPI                               | +/- 8.20  | +/- 11,492 |
| Blended FTSE (60% short; 40% mid) | +/- 3.60  | +/- 4,736  |
| FTSE Universe                     | +/- 3.90  | +/- 16,878 |

#### Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk is the risk of being unable to generate sufficient cash or its equivalent in a timely and cost-effective manner in order to meet commitments as they come due. The primary liabilities in the Plan are future benefit obligations [see note 6] and operating expenses. Liquidity requirements are managed through net monthly contributions and by investing in sufficiently liquid [e.g., publicly traded] equities, pooled funds and other easily marketable instruments.

#### Credit risk

Credit risk relates to the possibility that a loss may occur from failure of a fixed-income security issuer. At March 31, 2020, the maximum risk exposure for this type of investment amounts to \$432,761. The Plan limits credit risk by purchasing individual fixed-income instruments that have a credit rating of "A" or higher as rated by recognized Canadian bond rating services. The Plan also owns units of an indexed bond fund which may hold fixed-income instruments with credit ratings of "BBB" and above.

The following table shows the percentage of fixed-income holdings in the portfolio by credit rating:

| Rating | %    |
|--------|------|
| AAA    | 34.5 |
| AA     | 40.7 |
| A      | 18.1 |
| BBB    | 6.7  |

#### 11. CAPITAL DISCLOSURES

The purpose of the Plan is to provide pension benefits to Plan members. The Plan's objective when managing capital is to preserve assets in a manner that provides it with the ability to continue as a going concern. To accomplish this objective, a broadly diversified investment portfolio is utilized to achieve the highest rate of return within an acceptable level of risk. With the assistance of an outside consultant, the Plan's pension advisory committee and the University's administration department regularly monitor the asset mix to ensure compliance with the Statement of Investment Policies and Objectives.

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