

To the Editor:

It was encouraging to read the Gleaner's Oct 31st editorial calling attention to New Brunswick's dismal record of funding the operational needs of UNB and other public universities. The decline in provincial investment began in McKenna's time and, despite a pause under Bernard Lord, has never been reversed. As even the Graham government's controversial post-secondary education report acknowledged, this province's support for universities on a per student basis is the second worst in Canada.

Do people realize that UNB has fewer full-time professors and librarians today than it did 30 years ago? And yet it has nearly 80% more students. What must be the impact of this added professorial workload on the quality of the student experience?

UNB attempts to square this circle by employing a large number of contingent teachers, most of them shockingly underpaid and lacking health and pension benefits. None of them has job security.

What UNB and the three other public universities need now is not just realistic funding for day-to-day operations, though they certainly need that. They need from the province a multi-year funding corridor so that they can plan effectively for future as well as present student needs.

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