



Handling Negative Evaluations of Promotion to Professor

In the event an Associate Professor is denied promotion to Professor, department chairs can play a vital role in helping the faculty member understand the reasons why the promotion was denied and in supporting them in making decisions about next steps. Faculty members will respond to this difficult news in diverse ways and enabling them to make good, proactive choices that align with their aspirations and values can be a profoundly positive difference-maker on the many remaining years, if not decades, of the faculty member's career.

A 2022 [Chronicle of Higher Education article](#) shared some of next steps available to faculty members denied promotion, including the following:

- allowing time to grieve and recover from the negative review
- developing a clear understanding of why promotion was denied; in some sense, becoming a detective and asking for candid feedback
- reviewing their options for an appeal
- deciding on next steps, such as
 - starting to plan for another application for promotion, which might include expanding their network and/or adopting new directions in their teaching, scholarship, or service
 - reassessing their institutional commitment - do they stay or go? If they stay, what will that look like?

Department chairs can serve as a resource for faculty members in thinking through these questions and as they develop and follow through on their answers.