Informed Choices: Gender Gaps in Career Advice*

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Abstract

This paper provides the first causal evidence that gender affects the information an individual receives about careers. We conduct a large-scale field experiment in which real college students seek career information from 10,000 working professionals. We randomize whether a professional receives a message from a male or a female student. When students ask broadly for information about a career, female students receive substantially more information on work/life balance than male students. This gender difference persists when students specifically ask about work/life balance. A survey of professionals reveals paternalistic motives for discussing work/life balance with women, arising from the belief that this information is important for future family considerations. Combining findings from the field experiment, results from an information intervention, and extensive evidence of the importance of temporal demands in job selection, we conclude that gender gaps in information received about work/life balance are consequential for gender gaps in career choice.

Keywords: career information; gender; discrimination; correspondence study

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1 Introduction

Despite substantial convergence in the economic roles of men and women, gender inequality in labor market outcomes persists. A large literature documents that work/family trade-offs are at the root of these remaining disparities (Cortés and Pan, 2023). Upon the arrival of a first child, women's employment, hours worked, earnings, and wages drop precipitously, while men's outcomes are unaffected (Angelov et al., 2016; Kleven et al., 2019). At the same time, having children amplifies women's disproportionate share of domestic labor: time spent on childcare and other forms of non-market work rise.

Children affect women's choices long before parenthood, however. At labor market entry, women shy away from entering career paths with long and inflexible hours or those that penalize reduced or intermittent work, due to their perceived incompatibility with the future time demands of children (Polachek, 1981; Gronau, 1988; Goldin, 2014; Adda et al., 2017; Wiswall and Zafar, 2021; Wasserman, 2023). Prior to labor market entry, women tailor their human capital investments based on their ability to control and delay the timing of their first child (Goldin and Katz, 2002; Bailey et al., 2012; Gershoni and Low, 2021; Gallen et al., 2023). Embedded in these decisions—which major to pursue, which career to enter, and whether/when to have children—are beliefs about the magnitude of work/family trade-offs (Wiswall and Zafar, 2021). Despite the prominence of these parameters in decision-making, as of yet, there is little research on the forces that shape beliefs about the temporal demands of careers and beliefs about whether these demands are compatible with having children.

This paper provides novel evidence that informal conversations emphasize the temporal demands of careers to women. First, using a large-scale field experiment connecting college students and working professionals we establish that—prior to labor market entry—issues surrounding work/life balance are raised twice as often to women, *because* of their gender. This emphasis holds whether or not students specifically ask for information on work/life balance. Second, in online survey and vignette study of 2,500 professionals, we show that professionals intentionally depart from the stated preferences of students and instead provide information on work/life balance paternalistically, based on beliefs about what female students should or will value in the future. Childcare considerations are cited as a major reason for discussing work/life balance with young women, but less so for young men. Finally, using an information intervention among hundreds of college students, we show that information on work/life balance shapes students' beliefs about the temporal demands of careers, which particularly matter for the career choices of women. Together, the evidence suggests that societal expectations that women will experience work/family trade-offs influence the information transmitted to new labor market entrants, affecting their choices from the outset.

The field experiment recruits real college students to seek career information from 10,000 working professionals. For students beginning the process of career exploration, soliciting information from professionals in their fields of interest (an "informational interview") is a longstanding and common practice (Bolles, 1973). University career centers encourage students to conduct informational interviews and provide detailed resources to facilitate these exchanges, including introductory message templates, suggestions of whom to contact, and lists of potential questions.[1] The popularity of this practice is also evident in student behavior: 87 percent of students at the institution where we conduct our study have reached out to professionals for help with career choice.

In the experiment, students contact professionals using the most popular online professional networking platform. This platform is a natural setting for studying career information and additionally offers several methodological advantages. Nationwide, 58 percent of college students report using this platform (College Pulse, 2020). Among students similar to those in our study, the fraction is even higher: 92 percent have a profile on the platform, 56 percent use the platform as a source of information about careers, and 44 percent have reached out to professionals on this platform to get career information or advice.[2] We focus on professionals in four career paths that are majority male and tend to be time intensive, especially during the early career years: finance, management consulting, data science, and law.

In order to identify the causal effect of gender on information received, we randomize whether each of the 10,000 professionals in our sample is contacted by a male or female student and the pre-formulated question each professional is asked. Randomization ensures that any gender difference in information received is not due to gender differences in the types of professionals that students contact or the types of information that students solicit. In addition, the online setting allows us to limit which student characteristics are observed by professionals, so that the students are perceived as otherwise similar, aside from their gender. Our experimental design also overcomes a key challenge that has prevented researchers from studying information transmission: information is often transmitted through informal, private, one-on-one conversations, which are inherently unobservable to the researcher. An innovation of our study is that the students provide us with the verbatim responses that they receive, resulting in a novel data set with the demographic characteristics of students, professionals, and the transcripts of their conversations.

Our main finding is that women receive more information than men on work/life balance,

[1]For example, UCLA's Career Guide has a section on career exploration: https://web.archive.org/web/20240520144708/https://cdn.uconnectlabs.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/230/2023/09/UCLA-Career-Guide.pdf and the University of Chicago provides networking resources: https://web.archive.org/web/20230816172215/https://grad.uchicago.edu/career-development/career-development-resources/networking-resources/?tab-section=informationalinterviews.

[2]These statistics are from a survey we conducted and discuss in Section 5.

whether or not they specifically ask for it. Professionals were asked either a "broad" question about the pros and cons of a career path, or a "specific" question about a particular career attribute. The broad question tests whether professionals organically bring up different career attributes to female and male students. The specific questions further test whether, conditional on expressing interest in a particular career attribute, male and female students receive different responses from professionals.

We designed the experiment to study information provision on two career attributes that differentially affect the labor market choices of women: temporal demands, known colloquially as "work/life balance," and competitive culture (Goldin, 2014; Wiswall and Zafar, 2018; Cubas et al., 2019; Niederle and Vesterlund, 2011; Flory et al., 2015).[3] The specific questions ask for information about either work/life balance or competitive culture. When analyzing responses to the broad question, we focus on mentions of work/life balance and competitive culture. Discussion of work/life balance includes the hours worked per week, extent of work-related travel, and conflict between/accommodation of work responsibilities and other life priorities. Discussion of competitive culture includes competition within the workplace or among coworkers.

When students ask professionals broadly about the pros and cons of a career path, male and female students are equally likely to receive a response. However, responses to female students are twice as likely to mention work/life balance issues relative to responses to male students. We find that professionals mention workplace culture to male and female students at similar rates. These results are robust to the inclusion of controls for both professionals' and students' characteristics, incorporating non-response, alternative definitions of student gender, and re-weighting the sample to be representative of the student population where we conduct our study.

Professionals' discussions of work/life balance tend to be negative and make students more concerned about this issue. For example, one management consultant responded "Management Consulting can be considered a lifestyle since it requires travel, very long hours, always being on, and client-specific knowledge." Using subjective evaluations from a team of college students who were not study participants, we find that messages that discuss work/life balance increase concerns about this issue more than 75 percent of the time and decrease concerns only 3 percent of the time.

Our field experiment establishes that professionals provide more information on work/life balance

[3]Although careers can be characterized by numerous attributes, a main driver of the gender pay gap is temporal demands in the form of long, irregular, and/or continuous hours worked (Polachek, 1981; McDowell, 1982; Goldin, 2014; Cortés and Pan, 2019). Goldin (2014) argues that jobs disproportionately rewarding long hours amount to the last remaining hurdle in closing the gender pay gap. Another influential literature emphasizing the role of psychological traits has posited that women's aversion to competition may explain their lower wages and representation in jobs with pay contingent on competitive outcomes (Niederle and Vesterlund, 2011; Flory et al., 2015). While the investigation of gender differences in preferences for competition has mostly been conducted through lab studies, survey evidence shows that these factors can account for around 16 percent of the gender pay gap (Blau and Kahn, 2017).

issues to female students, because of their gender. The remainder of the paper investigates the causes and consequences of this differential information provision. Using a combination of evidence from our field experiment and additional surveys of students and professionals, we explore three possibilities for professionals' emphasis on work/life balance to female students: (1) professionals believe that female students want/need this information more than male students, (2) professionals believe that female students *should* want this information more than male students (paternalism), and/or (3) professionals have other considerations unrelated to student welfare.

Do professionals emphasize work/life balance to female students because they believe that female students want this information more than male students? To shed light on this possible mechanism, the field experiment includes a "specific" question, in which students ask specifically about work/life balance issues in the professional's career path. We find that the gender gap in information received persists: professionals are 28 percent more likely to respond to female students than to male students. This response rate gap emerges only when students ask professionals questions about work/life balance, and not when students ask about workplace culture or ask the broad question. These patterns suggest that professionals' beliefs about what students want to discuss are unlikely to be the sole driver of their emphasis on work/life balance to female students.

With two additional surveys, we further show that the information that professionals provide is inconsistent with both student preferences for information and professionals' beliefs about student preferences for information. First, we conduct a survey of students from the same university that asks students how they would allocate 15 minutes with a professional in their preferred career path among various career-related topics. While all students are interested in discussing work/life balance with a professional, female students allocate significantly *less* time to discussing this topic than male students.

We also show that professionals' information provision deviates from what they *believe* students want to discuss. To do so, we conduct a survey and vignette study of 2,500 U.S. professionals on Prolific. Survey respondents were shown characteristics of a job and instructed to imagine that this was their former employer. We then asked the respondent to allocate 15 minutes discussing the job with a hypothetical applicant—a new college graduate—across various topics. We also asked respondents what they think the applicant wants to discuss, allocating time across the same topics. We find that professionals' information provision purposefully differs from what they believe the applicant wants. In particular, professionals spend more time discussing the temporal demands of a job than they believe the applicant wants. Based on our surveys of students and professionals, we conclude that the information professionals supply does not match students' preferences or professionals' beliefs about students' preferences.

Using the vignette study of professionals, we probe the two remaining mechanisms for professionals' emphasis on work/life balance to women: professionals believe that female students *should* want this information more than male students (paternalism), and professionals have other considerations unrelated to student welfare. We find that, when advising women, professionals' provision of information on the temporal demands of the job is insensitive to (1) signals about how much the woman cares about work/life balance and (2) signals about the importance of considerations unrelated to applicant welfare. In contrast, when advising men, their provision is sensitive to these treatments. Professionals' lack of responsiveness to information and beliefs about what women want to discuss suggests that paternalistic motives contribute to their emphasis on work/life balance to women.[4]

When asked in an open-ended question why it is important to discuss work/life balance issues with young individuals, over a third of professionals volunteer different reasons for young men and young women. Childcare considerations are cited more than twice as often for women compared to men (41 percent vs. 18 percent). Professionals may recognize that these considerations are not on young women's minds presently or relevant in their current lives, consistent with paternalism. Professionals' focus on concerns that grow in importance over one's career may also explain why they do not emphasize workplace culture to women in the field experiment.

In the last part of the paper, we investigate the consequences of gender gaps in information provision. An extensive literature shows that women, more so than men, choose jobs based on their hours requirements (Eriksson and Kristensen, 2014; Goldin and Katz, 2016; Mas and Pallais, 2017; Wiswall and Zafar, 2018; Maestas et al., 2019; Wasserman, 2023). Gender gaps in information on work/life balance could amplify the effects of these gender gaps in preferences for temporal flexibility. Specifically, if discussion of work/life balance issues leads students to believe that certain careers are more temporally demanding, then differentially emphasizing these issues to women could further dissuade them from entering these careers. We provide two pieces of evidence consistent with this amplification mechanism. First, at the end of the field experiment, we surveyed student participants regarding their career plans. Students who received information on work/life balance from professionals are more likely to be deterred from their preferred career path, suggesting that gender gaps in information received generate gender gaps in deterrence.

Next, we conduct a pre-registered information intervention among over 400 college students that shows that information on work/life balance issues affects (both male and female) students' beliefs about careers. In the information intervention, students randomized into the treatment group are

[4]In other settings, paternalism manifests as parents shaping children's choices in ways that may be inconsistent with children's preferences (Doepke and Zilibotti, 2017), or employers avoiding hiring women in order to protect women from dangerous situations (Buchmann et al., 2023).

shown a message on the pros and cons of a particular career path, sourced from our original field experiment. Students randomized into the control group are shown the same message, with the portion discussing work/life balance removed. After reading the message, students are asked their beliefs about temporal attributes of the career path, including how many hours they would expect to work per week and what fraction of employees work part-time. For the latter attribute, we incentivize correct responses by making payments contingent on accuracy. We find that students who receive information on work/life balance issues believe that they would work more hours and that there is less part-time work in this job.

As a final exercise, we quantify the effects of gender gaps in information on gender gaps in career choice, by combining (1) the estimated gender gaps in receipt of work/life balance information from our field experiment, (2) the effect of this information on beliefs about hours requirements from our information intervention, and (3) estimates from an extensive literature on the disamenity value of long hours. A back-of-the-envelope calculation suggests that informal conversations with professionals would lead the average female student to evaluate the same job as though it paid 7.9 percent less and the average male student to evaluate the same job as though it paid 2.5 percent less. This back-of-the-envelope calculation is potentially a lower bound on the impact of gender gaps in information, if discouraging women from entering an occupation prevents changes in the way that work is structured and organized (Goldin and Katz, 2010).

Related Literature

This paper contributes to a number of literatures. First, we add to the extensive literature on how the conflicting time demands of work and family impact gender inequality in labor market outcomes. There is robust evidence that the career trajectories of men and women diverge sharply when they have children, at which time women take on the majority of childcare responsibilities (Bertrand et al., 2010; Kleven et al., 2019; Angelov et al., 2016; Gallen, 2023; Buzard et al., 2023; Adams-Prassl et al., forthcoming). This unequal sharing of household responsibilities is due in part to traditional household specialization (Becker, 1981; Hancock et al., 2024), differential external demands on women's time associated with children (Buzard et al., 2023), and internalized social norms (Kleven, 2022).[5] In addition, anticipation of work/family trade-offs shapes women's human capital investments well before motherhood (Polachek, 1981; Gronau, 1988; Adda et al., 2017; Wasserman, 2023). Our paper establishes that societal expectations of this trade-off affect the information transmitted to new labor market participants, and that this information in turn may discourage women from entering certain careers.

[5]It is also possible that women and men intrinsically differ in their preferences for home production.

Our paper additionally shows that even when we hold fixed many features of the networking process—including the number of professionals contacted, demographic characteristics of professionals contacted, and the messages sent to professionals—gender continues to influence information transmission. These findings complement existing research documenting gender differences in the structure, usage, and effects of professional networks (Mengel, 2020; Gallen and Wasserman, 2021; Zeltzer, 2020; Lindenlaub and Prummer, 2020; Obukhova and Kleinbaum, 2022).[6] Gender gaps in information transmission within informal exchanges also provide a possible mechanism for gender differences in the importance of advisors, teachers, and other role models in shaping career choices (Carrell et al., 2010; Kofoed and McGovney, 2019; Porter and Serra, 2020; Breda and Napp, 2019; Ginther et al., 2020).[7]

We also contribute to a nascent literature that explores whether the supply of information differs based on demographic characteristics of the information seeker. While there is robust evidence that social interactions are consequential for labor market outcomes, researchers rarely gain access to the precise content of these exchanges (Beaman, 2011; Hvide and Oyer, 2018; Michelman et al., 2021; Chetty et al., 2022; Cullen and Perez-Truglia, 2023). Our paper opens the black box of one-on-one private conversations to investigate whether the information transmitted hinges on gender. In doing so, we add to a small body of research on the effects of demographic characteristics on the supply of information. Milkman et al. (2015) uses fictitious prospective PhD students to send emails to faculty members asking about research opportunities, and finds that women and minorities are less likely to receive a reply than white men. Our study isolates the information seeking motive, by emphasizing that the student is not currently looking for job opportunities. Kalla et al. (2018) finds that fictitious male and female students are equally likely to receive a response to emails to local politicians seeking advice for a class project on how to become a politician.[8] Relative to these papers, we demonstrate that the informational content of responses differs by student gender and gender-differentiated responses have an effect on students' beliefs about job attributes. In addition, we provide evidence on the motivations behind differential provision of information.

Our findings also relate to the literature on the reproduction of inequality. The one-on-one conversations studied in this paper have the benefit of being tailored to students' interests and preferences. If professionals know the evolution of students' preferences better than students do themselves, then emphasizing work/life balance issues to women could lead to a more efficient

[6] Lindenlaub and Prummer (2020) show that women have fewer but more clustered network connections than men, while Zeltzer (2020) and Mengel (2020) find substantial gender homophily in network formation, which contributes to gender gaps in performance and pay.

[7] For example, Canaan and Mouganie (2019) find that among college students in Lebanon, being counseled by a female scientist, relative to a male scientist, increases the likelihood of women majoring in STEM fields.

[8] In a similar vein, Giulietti et al. (2017) finds that emails signed by Black-sounding names are less likely to receive responses to requests for information on local public services.

allocation of workers to jobs. However, the information transmitted in these conversations may also ingrain attitudes and structures from past generations into new labor market entrants.[9] Norms may lag behind technological innovations that allow for more egalitarian sharing of household responsibilities, a phenomenon sociologists refer to as "cultural lag" (Ogburn, 1957; Brinkman and Brinkman, 1997; Ridgeway, 2011). A large literature in economics also documents the long-term persistence of gender norms, rooted in, for example, historical agricultural practices (Alesina et al., 2013; Giuliano, 2020; Bau and Fernández, 2023). Our paper documents a novel yet ubiquitous mechanism—informal conversations—through which norms may be preserved.

Finally, this paper advances the literature that relies on correspondence studies to estimate discrimination. In a traditional correspondence study, fictitious resumes with randomized applicant characteristics are sent to employers. One issue that has been raised regarding these studies is that—due to the fictional nature of the job applicants—employers are being deceived and their time is being wasted (Pager, 2007; Bertrand and Duflo, 2017; Kessler et al., 2019).[10] Our paper resolves this issue by incorporating real students interested in career information, seeking advice from real professionals. While incorporating real students cedes precise control over student attributes, we take several steps to ensure "all else is equal," including recruiting students from similar majors, limiting the information available on students' profiles, controlling for observable differences between students in our regressions, and testing the robustness of results to limiting the sample to students with no online presence aside from their profile. Our main results are robust to all of these specifications, as well as to running the main specification without any controls and to various classifications of student gender. Recent work by Kessler et al. (2019) develops a new methodology called incentivized resume rating (IRR) for eliciting employer preferences for applicant characteristics, also without deceiving employers. In the IRR design, employers are asked by researchers to rate resumes and are incentivized to truthfully reveal their preferences. Both IRR and the methodology in this paper respect employers'/professionals' time. Our methodology additionally preserves the broad reach of a traditional correspondence study and does not require direct recruitment of employers/professionals.

2 Experimental Design

To investigate whether informal conversations about careers transmit different information to men and women, we implement a large-scale field experiment in which college students solicit information

[9] This also relates to a literature in education documenting that teacher stereotypes amplify student gender gaps in math performance (Lavy and Sand, 2018; Carlana, 2019).

[10] See Lahey and Oxley (2018) for empirical estimates of time spent reviewing resumes.

from professionals on the most popular online professional networking platform.[11]

Process: From February 2020 to June 2020, we recruited 100 college students at a large research university to send messages to 10,000 professionals. We advertised the study using email lists for the undergraduate economics, public policy, and math majors, extracurricular clubs related to economics, and undergraduate economics courses. The advertisement was targeted to students interested in career advice. Students interested in participating were asked to fill out a background survey, in which we asked for basic demographic information as well as whether the student was interested in receiving information on four career paths that undergraduate economics majors commonly choose post-graduation: finance, management consulting, data science, and law. These career paths are majority male and tend to be time intensive, especially during early career years. We selected students who expressed interest in receiving information on the career attributes of these fields.[12]

In an in-person or virtual meeting, each student participant was guided through the process of creating a profile on the online professional networking site.[13] Almost 90 percent of student participants already had a profile on this platform and it is common for students to use this platform to reach out to professionals for career information/advice.[14] We asked that each student restrict their profile to minimal information, including their first name and last initial, student status, university affiliation, start year and anticipated year of graduation, college major, and the number of network connections they have on this platform. Students who already had a profile were asked to temporarily remove other information from their profile for the three-week duration of the study. It is not possible to control for the informational content embedded in students' own profile photos, and using those would have compromised the internal validity of the study. Our choice was therefore between profiles without a photo—which could lead to professionals suspecting the profile is a bot/fake—and using a uniform photo across all student participants. In order to generate a realistic profile and increase response rates, we provided students with the same photo of an iconic university building to use as a profile picture (see Appendix Figure D1). We confirmed that students created a profile with the requisite restrictions through profile screenshots and independent verification on the site.

The pool of professionals consists of approximately 10,000 individuals on the site with work experience in the fields of finance, management consulting, law, or data science. We selected professionals that the student participants would reasonably contact outside of the experiment.

[11] This study was pre-registered on the AEA Social Sciences Registry under AEARCTR-0005464.

[12] See Appendix E.1 for the background survey.

[13] See Appendix E.2 for the instructions provided to students.

[14] In a survey of students from the same university interested in the four career paths, we find that 44 percent of students have used this platform to contact professionals for career information/advice.

Specifically, the professionals were found through a search of the professional networking site for individuals who work in the students' metropolitan area, who have work experience in at least one of the four fields, and who have a degree from a U.S. News and World Report top-40 ranked university.[15] We used the list of 10,000 professionals to create sets of 100 randomly assigned professionals to provide to student participants.[16] Professionals were stratified by field. Within each field, professionals were randomly assigned a message type and the student who would contact them. Each student was given a list of 100 professionals to contact: 13 data scientists, 28 finance professionals, 33 lawyers, and 26 management consultants. These proportions reflect the composition of professionals that came up in a search of the site. The students chose neither the professionals whom they contacted nor the messages sent. Figure 1 provides a graphical depiction of the experimental design.

We provided the text of the initial message that students sent to professionals. Each professional-student communication used one of four message types, which were designed to emulate a conventional request for career information during an informational interview.[17] To test whether different career attributes are emphasized to male and female students, students sent a broad message that asked about the pros and cons of the professional's field. To test whether there are gender differences in information received, conditional on bringing up a specific career attribute, students sent three message types: (1) a specific question asking whether work/life balance is a concern in the professional's field, (2) a specific question asking whether competitive culture is a concern in the professional's field, and (3) a factual question asking about billable hours at a large law firm (sent only to law professionals). We selected the above career attributes based on documented gender differences in preferences for competitive environments and temporal flexibility (Goldin, 2014; Wiswall and Zafar, 2018; Cubas et al., 2019; Niederle and Vesterlund, 2011; Flory et al., 2015). Note that the factual question differs from the specific questions in that the answer to this question should not depend on student gender, since billable hours are a contractual obligation

[15] Professionals' profiles were checked to ensure they have work experience in one of the four fields.

[16] The random assignment took place prior to the recruitment of students, meaning that we could not add professionals to the experiment after the experiment started. Because we chose the 10,000 professionals who best matched our criteria, after the experiment started we could not add additional professional to the sample. If we had added to the professional sample after the experiment started, the characteristics of the new professionals would have been systematically different from the original 10,000.

[17] These messages were based on suggested wording from a university career center guide on informational interviews. See pages 10 and 11 of `https://web.archive.org/web/20240520144708/https://cdn.uconnectlabs.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/230/2023/09/UCLA-Career-Guide.pdf`. Gallen and Wasserman (2021) provides evidence from a student-alumni professional networking website that 64 percent of career-related messages ask broadly about the professional's career path. There is no gender difference in the propensity to ask this question. In a survey of the same population used in the present study, we find that of students interested in the career paths we study, 85 percent want to spend 15 minutes talking to a professional in their field of interest (an informational interview), 92 percent have a profile on the platform, and 44 percent have messaged someone on the platform to get career information/advice.

invariant to employee characteristics.[18] We designed the specific questions asking whether work/life balance or competitive culture is a concern to elicit a yes or no response, which we analyze below in the response content.[19]

All message templates emphasize that the student is only seeking career information, as well as explicitly state that the student is not searching for a job. Message templates are in Appendix Figure A1. To summarize, the four message types are:

1. Broad: Asks broadly about the pros and cons of the professional's field.
2. Specific work/life balance: Asks if work/life balance is a concern in the field.
3. Specific competitive culture: Asks if competitive culture is a concern in the field.
4. Factual hours (law only): Asks what the billable hours requirements are at a large law firm.

Before sending any messages, students were asked to spend 20 minutes studying the profiles of professionals they would be messaging and provide three sets of rankings. Specifically, we ask them to rank the five professionals they would be most interested in asking about the pros and cons of the professional's field, work/life balance in the professional's field, and workplace culture in the professional's field. Students were informed that these rankings would not affect the next step of the study, in which students sent messages to all 100 professionals in their list.

For data science, management consulting, and finance professionals, students sent half of the messages using the broad question and one-quarter of the messages using each specific question. For law professionals, each student sent 44 percent of the messages using the broad question, 22 percent using each specific question, and 12 percent using the factual question. Within each field, professionals were randomly assigned a message type. Each professional received only one message.

In order to estimate the causal effect of student gender on career information received, we randomized whether a professional was sent a message from a male or a female student as well as the specific message type, as depicted in Figure 1. The students sent the messages on weekdays during typical working hours.[20] When a message is sent to a professional, depending on the professional's site preferences, they receive an email notification, an app notification, and/or an alert on the

[18] Answers to the other specific questions may depend on student gender, if for example, parental leave policies depend on employee gender.

[19] Although the specific questions describe the career attributes in a negative light, we note that professionals were willing to refute the concern or say "it depends," especially in response to the competitive culture question (Appendix Table A1).

[20] In some cases, students were unable to send all 100 messages in one sitting. In these situations, we asked that the students send the messages as soon as they were able to do so. We recorded the actual date and time that each message was sent.

website. After a few days, the site automatically generates a reminder email notification of the message if the professional has not yet responded to the request.

Students were asked to provide the initial responses they receive within 21 days of sending the messages.[21] In order to verify that we obtained all initial responses received, we asked students for screenshots of their message inbox as well as screenshots of each response. If a professional responded, the student could choose whether he or she would like to continue the interaction. We emphasized to students that we would not ask for detailed information on these follow-up interactions. As an indication that we selected students based on their genuine interest in career advice, 34 percent of students reported that they planned to stay in touch with at least one of the professionals who responded. Students were asked to not use the site for activities unrelated to the study for the three-week period. We independently verified that students did not change their profile or otherwise engage in site activity throughout the study period. Three weeks after sending the messages, we followed up with the students to ensure that we had received all of their initial responses. To assess the role of information received on students' future career choices, three weeks after sending messages, students filled out a survey with their career intentions. Upon successful completion of this survey, students were paid $75.

Methodological advance and identification: In several ways, our experimental design resembles a traditional correspondence study in which researchers send fictitious resumes to employers in order to estimate the causal effect of job applicant characteristics on callback rates. In these studies, the resume format, the information provided in the resume, and other aspects of the correspondence are controlled by the researcher. The advantages of creating fictitious applicants are numerous: the researcher has precise control over applicant attributes and avoids dealing with the complexities of the characteristics/behaviors of real people. By design, the applicant characteristic of interest is orthogonal to other applicant characteristics as well as to employer characteristics. In addition, the study is generally low cost and logistically straightforward to implement (Pager, 2007; Bertrand and Duflo, 2017).

In our study, we similarly maintain precise control over the text of the messages sent to professionals, and student characteristics are orthogonal to professional characteristics. In contrast to a traditional correspondence study, we incorporate real students who are interested in information on careers. Incorporating real students poses some challenges with regard to identification of the causal effect of student gender, however, since we cede control over the attributes of students. In particular, we cannot ensure that other student characteristics are orthogonal to student gender.

[21] The vast majority of responses are received within two weeks of sending a message.

The online setting allows us to mitigate concerns that other student characteristics confound the effect of student gender: (1) as discussed above, we ask students to strictly limit the information provided on their profiles, (2) in our regressions, we control for all student characteristics that are directly observed on the site, (3) using information from the background survey and whether the student has an online presence aside from their profile, we test whether the effect of student gender is sensitive to the inclusion of student characteristics that could be inferred from the profile (e.g. race/ethnicity) or observed elsewhere online, and (4) we examine whether the results are robust to restricting the sample to students without an online presence.

3 Data and Econometric Framework

3.1 Data

We collect data on response rates and the text of initial responses. We analyze the text using manual classification, sentiment analysis, and natural language processing tools that characterize word distributions. For responses to the broad question, manual classification entails coding whether the response mentions work/life balance or competitive culture. To manually classify messages, we employed five research assistants and gave each batches of messages to code (11 batches total). Each batch contained only de-identified message text and *no other information* except a random code which would later allow us to merge the classifications with the characteristics of senders and recipients. Messages were de-identified prior to being put into batches by replacing names of the student and professional with an X. The messages were coded by at least two research assistants. The authors of this paper then verified and reconciled the codes in case of disagreement. All coding and reconciliation was done without knowing the characteristics of message senders and recipients.

Professionals' mentions of work/life balance were coded using the following definition from the Cambridge dictionary: "The amount of time you spend doing your job compared with the amount of time you spend with your family and doing things you enjoy."[22] This includes explicit references to work/life balance, as well as discussion of the hours worked per week, extent of work-related travel, and conflict between/accommodation of work responsibilities and other life priorities. One paraphrased example of a work/life balance mention is: "Management Consulting can be considered a lifestyle since it requires travel, very long hours, always being on, and client-specific knowledge."

We code professionals' mentions of competitive culture when the response explicitly mentions competition within the workplace or among coworkers. Due to the low frequency of mentions of competitive culture—only six responses mention this attribute—we also create a broader metric of

[22] https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/work-life-balance

workplace culture, which includes descriptions of interpersonal relations among colleagues, the work environment, or ethical issues in the workplace. One paraphrased example of a culture mention is: "Though this is changing, finance sometimes still depends on connections, bribes, or corruption."

For the responses to the specific questions, which were designed to elicit a yes or no, we manually classify whether the response confirms that work/life balance or culture is a concern, refutes that it is a concern, or says "it depends" on factors such as the company or more granular occupation. In addition, we hire undergraduates (who are not experiment participants) to provide their subjective evaluations of the tone of all responses, specifically whether the response would cause a typical undergraduate student to be more or less concerned about work/life balance or workplace culture in the professional's field. For the responses to the factual hours question, we manually extract the hours requirement, which is a numerical value of hours or numerical range of hours. For answers with a range of hours, we take the midpoint of the range.

To analyze the role of professional attributes in generating gender differences in information received, we collect publicly available information on professionals on this site, including their education, gender, and network thickness. We use profile pictures and textual information to assign the gender of each professional. In cases where a picture or text-based information on gender was not available on their profile, we assign gender based on the professional's first name using U.S. Census and Social Security Administration name files. This process successfully classified gender for 99.5 percent of professionals.

3.2 Sample restrictions

The study recruited 100 college students to send messages to approximately 10,000 professionals. One student (and 100 professionals) was used for a pilot and is excluded from the analysis. We discuss this pilot in detail in Appendix B. Five students withdrew due to unforeseen logistical issues with their profiles or with sending the messages. Of the 94 students who were able to successfully create a profile and send messages, 89 students provided data on the responses they received. The five students who dropped out after sending all of their messages constitute sample attrition. Once the experiment started, we could not add more professionals to the sample. Because we chose the 10,000 professionals who best matched our criteria, if we had added to the professional sample after the experiment started, then the characteristics of the new professionals would have been systematically different from the original 10,000.[23] We diligently followed up with all student participants and found that students who took a very long time to provide responses (>4 months)

[23]Once a student started the message sending process, we also could not assign the professionals on their list to another student (we did not want to contact any professionals twice).

had similar response rates to those students who completed the study promptly. This fact makes us less concerned that students who dropped out or who did not reply after sending messages did so because of the replies they received.

Since we intend to estimate the causal effect of student gender on information received, we limit the main analysis sample to students whose first names unambiguously convey their true gender. We note that all results are robust to including students with gender ambiguous names. We limit the main sample using the U.S. Census and Social Security Administration name files. If a student's name is at least 90 percent male or female, and coincides with the student's actual gender, then the student is included in the main analysis. This sample restriction drops 13 students. Our final sample for the analysis consists of 76 students who contacted 7,602 professionals across four career categories.[24]

3.3 Summary statistics

Summary statistics for the students in the final sample are reported in Table 1, overall and by student gender. The top panel presents student attributes that are visible on or can be easily inferred from the student's profile. Among all students, 58 percent are female. The students are primarily freshmen and sophomores, and 62 percent are economics majors. The substantial representation of economics majors is consistent with our recruiting strategy and the fact that the four career paths chosen are those that economics majors primarily enter post-graduation.

Many students already had profiles on this platform, which is reflected in their number of network connections. Other students—14 percent—created a profile for the first time through this study. We also record whether students had any information on their profile beyond what is listed in the top panel of this table or had another profile issue that precluded perfect compliance with the profile restrictions. In general, these profile issues were limited to minor deviations from protocol such as a few activities or skills being visible on the profile. We control for the deviations from profile restrictions in all regressions.

In a background survey that students filled out prior to sending messages, we collected information on student attributes that are partially observed based on profile information, may be found elsewhere online, or correlated with information found online. For example, student race/ethnicity may be inferred from students' names and first generation college goer could be correlated with the extracurricular activities students are involved in (Jack, 2019). Students are evenly split between race/ethnicity categories and 22 percent are first generation college-goers. The

[24]Our final sample of professionals was 10,003, so three students were assigned 101 professionals. Two of these students are in the final student sample.

majority of students have some online presence aside from their profile on this site. While male and female students are overall similar, we observe that female students are less likely to be economics or STEM majors, have fewer network connections, and are more likely to identify as Asian/Asian American.

Table 2 reports summary statistics for professionals, overall and by field. One-third of professionals are female, and this varies substantially across field, with representation the lowest in finance and the highest in law. The professionals are, on average, in their late 30s. Professionals were selected based on their attendance of a top-40 U.S. News and World Report university for some part of their education and this is reflected in the selectivity of undergraduate institutions and the substantial fraction who attended an Ivy League university. More than 20 percent of professionals are alumni of the student's college, with a lower fraction among lawyers. The majority have well-established networks on this site.

Appendix Table A1 presents summary statistics for the main outcomes, including response rates and mentions of work/life balance and workplace culture in responses to the broad question. The overall response rate across all question types is 12 percent, with a lower rate of response to the broad question (10 percent) and the highest rates of response to the specific work/life balance and competitive culture questions (14 and 15 percent, respectively). This response rate is higher than correspondence studies that sends pitch emails to venture capitalists (6.5 percent), similar to studies that send applications to jobs, and somewhat lower than studies that send messages to existing nextwork connections on LinkedIn (21 percent) and emails to politicians asking for career advice (26 percent) (Gornall and Strebulaev, Forthcoming; Agan and Starr, 2018; Deming et al., 2016; Evsyukova et al., 2023; Kalla et al., 2018). In Appendix Figure A2, we observe that the distribution of response rates is centered around 12 percent. Among responses to the broad question that asks about the pros/cons of the professional's field, 11 percent bring up work/life balance issues and 12 percent mention workplace culture.

Appendix Table A2 reports results from tests of covariate balance. For each professional characteristic, we run a regression of this characteristic on whether the student who sent the professional a message is female. Professional characteristics are balanced across students, indicating that the randomization was successful.

3.4 Econometric framework

In order to estimate the causal effect of student gender on information received, we use the following regression specification:

$$Y_m = \alpha + \beta StudentFemale_m + X_m'\gamma + \epsilon_m \tag{1}$$

where the dependent variable, Y_m, is an outcome such as an indicator for whether message m received a response, or whether the response mentions a specific career attribute.[25] The independent variables are an indicator for whether the message was sent by a female student, $StudentFemale_m$, as well as a vector of message and student controls, X_m. In our baseline specification, we include controls for message characteristics: categorical variables for the day of the week and the time of day that the message was sent, a linear term for the date that the message was sent, and the field of the professional. We also include controls for the characteristics of the students who sent the messages that are directly observable on the site: college major (economics, STEM, other), expected college graduation year, number of network connections, and whether the student was completely compliant with the profile restrictions.[26] Standard errors are clustered at the student level.

Our selection on observables design is well suited to the online setting: we control what the professionals see about students and can directly include these characteristics as controls in the regression. We also report specifications without any controls and find similar results. We do not use this as our main specification because there are differences between male and female students visible to professionals on students' profiles (Table 1). To investigate whether our results are influenced by a combination of these imbalances and heterogeneous effects of student gender, we also implement a re-weighting exercise in which we make our sample demographically representative of the student population at the university that we study.

We test whether the coefficient on student gender is sensitive to the inclusion of additional student characteristics that may be available elsewhere online: student race/ethnicity, college GPA, first generation student status, and an indicator for whether there is information publicly available on the student through an online search. College GPA and first generation student status are known to be correlated with the extracurricular activities students are involved in, which may be visible online (Jack, 2019). Since student race/ethnicity could also be conveyed through the student's name, we consider this variable partially observed and estimate a separate specification to test

[25] We note that because each professional received exactly one message, indexing observations at the message level is interchangeable with indexing observations at the professional level.

[26] Some students who had profiles prior to the experiment were unable to completely remove all information from their profile. This extra information may include site activity, relevant labor market skills, and extracurricular activities.

sensitivity of the main results to this specific control. As an additional check on whether students' online presence confounds the results, in the Appendix we limit the sample to students with no online presence aside from their profile on the professional platform and find similar results.

4 The Information Students Receive Depends on Their Gender

4.1 Broad question

In this section, we analyze responses to the broad question and document that professionals emphasize work/life balance issues to women, because of their gender. When students ask professionals about the pros and cons of their career path, male and female students are equally likely to receive a response. Responses to female students, however, are substantially more likely to mention work/life balance issues. We will discuss the specific questions later in this section.

Response rates

We start by testing whether student gender affects response rates to the broad question that asks about the pros/cons of the professional's field. We estimate Equation (1), and use as the dependent variable an indicator for whether a message received a response from the professional. The results are reported in Table 3, columns 1–3. Column 1 presents the results with the baseline message and student controls. We observe that response rates to male and female students are very similar; the coefficient on $StudentFemale_m$ is 0.011 and statistically insignificant. Consistent with the notion that the effect of student gender is not confounded by other student characteristics, when we include the supplemental student characteristics that may be observable elsewhere online, the coefficient on student female exhibits little change (columns 2 and 3).[27] The results are robust to the inclusion of students with ambiguously gendered names (Appendix Tables A3 and A4), to not including controls (Appendix Table A5), to restricting to students with no other online presence (Appendix Table A6), and to re-weighting the sample demographics to be representative of the student population at the university where we conduct our study (Appendix Table A7).[28] Based on these results, we conclude that professionals are just as willing to engage with male and female students when they ask a broad question.

[27] Heckman and Siegelman (1993) raise the possibility that in correspondence studies, differences in the variance of unobservable productivity could explain differences in mean callback rates. We test for this in our setting using the methodology developed by Neumark (2012) and find that we cannot reject that the variance of unobservable characteristics of male and female students is the same.

[28] Logit and probit specifications yield similar findings (Appendix Tables A8 and A9).

Response content

We next analyze whether there are gender differences in the content of the responses to the broad question. As mentioned in the Introduction, we focus on two career attributes that are known to differentially affect the occupational and job choices of women relative to men: work/life balance and competitive culture. We restrict the sample to responses received, estimate Equation (1), and use as the dependent variable an indicator for whether the response mentions a work/life balance issue. Table 4 reports the results for the 363 responses to the broad question. Responses to female students are more than twice as likely as responses to male students to mention work/life balance issues. Among responses to male students, 6.7 percent mention a work/life balance issue. Using the estimates in column 1, the rate for female students is 8.7 percentage points higher. Controlling for student characteristics that are not directly observed on the site does not affect the results. If we assume that non-response is equivalent to not mentioning work/life balance in a response, then we can expand the sample to include all of the messages. When we do this, the rates of mentioning work/life balance are similarly differentiated by student gender (see Appendix Table A10). The inclusion of students with ambiguously gendered names does not change the results (Appendix Tables A11 and A12), nor does the exclusion of controls (Appendix Table A13), nor does re-weighting the sample demographics (Appendix Table A7). Results are also similar when we restrict to students with no other online presence (Appendix Table A14), and use logit/probit specifications (Appendix Tables A15 and A16).

The greater emphasis on work/life balance in responses to women is not driven by differences in the types of professionals who respond to male and female students. We modify Equation (1) to include controls for professionals' gender, undergraduate graduation year, undergraduate institution selectivity, network thickness, whether the professional is an alumnus of the student's college, and whether the professional has a graduate degree. In Table 5, across all outcomes, the coefficient on $StudentFemale_m$ is invariant to the inclusion of professional controls. Appendix Table A17 confirms that the average characteristics of professionals who respond to male and female students are similar. For example, female professionals make up 24.8 percent of respondents to female students and 25.5 percent of respondents to male students.

Figure 2 further explores whether the differential provision of information to female students is concentrated among certain subgroups of professionals (coefficients are reported in Appendix Table A18). Each entry represents the coefficient on $StudentFemale_m$ from a separate regression, with the subgroup of professionals listed along the y-axis. Professionals who are female, alumni of the students' university, older, have a degree from an Ivy League university, and work in finance and law are more likely to emphasize work/life balance to female students.

In Appendix Table A19 we estimate whether the additional information provided on work/life balance to female students is driven by three specific topics: (1) the duration of a typical workweek, (2) flexibility of work schedules, and (3) the ability (or inability) to work from home.[29] Responses to female students are more than twice as likely (5.4 percentage points more likely) to mention the duration of the typical workweek relative to male students. It also appears that responses to female students are more likely to contain information about work schedule flexibility, but this gender difference is not statistically significant.

Mentions of work/life balance tend to be negative. Below are paraphrased examples of responses that mention work/life balance:

> [Law] A career in law opens many doors...and also offers long hours, hard work, firm deadlines, and many challenges.

> [Finance] Challenges can be the hours depending on the area of finance (corporate finance FPA, consulting, investment banking, or even accounting).

Using subjective evaluations from a team of college students who were not study participants, we characterize the anticipated effect of the responses. In particular, we ask the students to rate the extent to which a response would make a typical college student more or less concerned about work/life balance (workplace culture) in the professional's field. Based on the students' evaluations, responses containing mentions of work/life balance increased concern about this issue more than 75 percent of the time. Only three percent of such responses made students less concerned about work/life balance.[30]

We also investigate whether the additional information on work/life balance that women receive crowds out other, potentially useful, information on careers. We find no significant gender differences in the overall length of replies, suggesting that the additional emphasis on work/life balance to female students may displace other information (Appendix Table A21). Although our experimental design and analysis focus on two career attributes—work/life balance and workplace culture—in Online Appendix C, we also provide an exploratory analysis of the effect of gender on other message components, using manual classification, nonparametric natural language processing, and lexicon-based sentiment analysis. Overall, we find few gender differences in sentiment and word usage, but professionals are less likely to offer advice or state their qualifications to women relative to men.

[29] These topics correspond to two O*NET work context categories and one researcher-defined category. For more information on these categories, see Online Appendix Table C.1.

[30] When we consider all responses (not just those mentioning work/life balance), we find that responses to female students are more likely to increase concern about work/life balance, but this contrast is not statistically significant (see Appendix Table A20).

Finally, we estimate gender differences in mentions of competitive culture in responses to the broad question. Competitive culture is mentioned in only six messages, but the rates of mentioning it are similar to male and female students (Appendix Table A22). Due to the extremely low frequency of mentions of competitive culture, we also test for gender differences in mentions of workplace culture more generally, which includes descriptions of interpersonal relations among colleagues, the work environment, or ethical issues in the workplace. Twelve percent of all responses to the broad question mention workplace culture (Appendix Table A1). Across specifications, the point estimates for the coefficient on $StudentFemale_m$ are close to zero (Table 4 columns 4–6 and Table 5 columns 5 and 6). One limitation of our experiment is that we only track professionals' initial responses, in which they may be reluctant to discuss sensitive or controversial issues (as well as issues that could make their firm vulnerable to legal action) (Sockin and Sojourner, 2023). Consistent with this, only three responses to the broad question mentioned sexism or sexual harassment.

4.2 Specific and factual questions

Response rates

Recall that there are three message types that ask about specific career attributes: the message that asks whether work/life balance is a concern ("specific work/life balance"), the message that asks whether competitive culture is a concern ("specific competitive culture"), and the message that asks the minimum billable hours requirement for a first-year associate at a large law firm ("factual hours"). In Table 3, we investigate gender differences in response rates to these three questions. In columns 4–6, we find that, in contrast to the broad question, student gender does affect professionals' propensity to respond to the specific work/life balance question. Considering the baseline specification from column 4, female students are 3.7 percentage points, or 28 percent, more likely to receive a response relative to male students. Furthermore, when students ask a fact-based question related to work/life balance ("factual hours"), female students receive 80 percent more responses than male students (Table 3, columns 10–12), though the coefficient is not consistently statistically significant. Taking these results together, we find that even when students specifically request information on work/life balance, female students receive more of it.

Consistent with the result that workplace culture is not differentially emphasized to female students in the broad question, there is no gender difference in response rates to the specific question on competitive culture (columns 7–9). This result is not driven by professionals' unwillingness to engage with students on this topic; in fact, the specific competitive culture question had the highest response rate.[31]

[31]These results are robust to the inclusion of students with ambiguously gendered names (Appendix Table A3),

Response content

Next, we characterize the content of responses to the questions on specific career attributes. Overall, the responses to the work/life balance question confirm that work/life balance is a concern in the professional's field and make students more concerned about this issue (Appendix Table A1). Only seven percent state that work/life balance is not a valid concern. Two paraphrased examples of responses are below:

> [Law] It's definitely a valid concern. At a large law firm, your schedule will be outside of your control. You will not have your evenings, weekends, or vacations. In-house is usually better in terms of weekends and vacations, but it is still very demanding.

> [Management Consulting] Yes, would expect between 60–80 hours of work per week and little predictability Mon–Thurs on hours. Weekends are usually open though.

The responses to female students do not display meaningful content or tone differences relative to the responses to male students (Appendix Tables A20, A24, and A25), suggesting that student gender affects the willingness of professionals to discuss work/life balance, rather than the content, conditional on discussion. Although the specific questions describe the career attributes in a negative light, we note that professionals were willing to refute the concern or say "it depends," especially when responding to the competitive culture question (Appendix Table A25).

Turning to the factual hours question, the point estimates suggest that women are quoted higher hours requirements for associates at large law firms. Unfortunately, we are underpowered to detect large differences (Appendix Table A26). We also note that because student gender affects response rates to the specific work/life balance question and the factual hours question, the effect of gender on the content of responses may be driven by the marginal respondents to female students or by differential treatment of male and female students.

5 Professionals' Motivations

Our findings demonstrate that, relative to male students, female students receive substantially more information on work/life balance, whether or not they ask for it. In contrast, male students receive less information on work/life balance, even when they specifically ask for it. Why do professionals emphasize work/life balance to female students? In this section, we provide a conceptual framework to guide our discussion of professionals' motivations for information provision. Then we use

controls for the composition of professionals (Appendix Table A23), and to re-weighting the sample demographics to be representative of the student population at the university where we conduct our study (Appendix Table A7).

evidence from the field experiment and two additional surveys to distinguish between professionals' motivations.

5.1 Conceptual framework

Students engaging in career exploration solicit information from experienced advisors. Advisors choose to send students information through a message M, which affects students' perceptions of careers. Students rely on their perceptions to make career choices in order to maximize their present discounted value of future utility, U. What do advisors maximize? Drawing on models of parenting styles by Doepke and Zilibotti (2017) and Doepke et al. (2019), we assume that advisors can be imperfectly altruistic, placing weight not only on students' preferences, U, but also on other considerations.

If advisors are purely altruistic, they give students information consistent with maximizing U. If instead, advisors are paternalistic, they believe that the student's utility function should be a different function $\tilde{U}$, where $\tilde{U} \neq U$. This may happen if an advisor believes that the student will experience unanticipated changes to their preferences, if an advisor believes that the student should discount the future less, or if an advisor thinks that there are parts of the utility function unknown to the student.[32]

We also acknowledge the possibility that advisors could have non-empathetic preferences, that is, derive utility from information provision due to reasons unrelated to the student's utility. For example, information provision could help the advisor work through their own problems (Eskreis-Winkler et al., 2018), could achieve a larger social objective, such recruiting underrepresented minorities to their field, or could arise from taste-based discrimination. We represent utility from these objectives (which do not have any altruistic or paternalistic component) with the function S.

Putting the various objectives of advisor together, advisors choose a message M from a set $\mathcal{M}$ to maximize:

$$V = \alpha[\gamma U(M) + (1-\gamma)\tilde{U}(M)] + (1-\alpha)S(M) - C(M)$$

where α represents the weight placed on the student's welfare relative to the advisor's non-empathetic objectives. Within the consideration of the student's welfare, γ represents the weight

[32] It is possible that the message advisors send directly changes preferences. We consider U to be student utility *before* seeking advice, and $\tilde{U}$ may include the change in preferences after having a conversation with an advisor. For example, if professionals explain in detail how working long hours may make a person unhappy, a student may feel differently about the same job attributes relative to how they felt before the conversation. It is also possible that professionals do not change student's actual preferences, but provide messages that lead to behavior more in line with what professionals believe to be the correct choice. They may exaggerate negative aspects of a job in order to ensure that a student avoids that job, believing that this will in the long run make the student happier. We group these possibilities together in our setting under the umbrella term "paternalism." It is interesting to consider the normative implications of each possibility separately, but it is outside of the scope of this paper.

placed on the student's utility, U, versus the advisor's belief about what the student's utility function should be, $\tilde{U}$. $C(M)$ is the cost associated with a particular message (which can be increasing in time spent, in lying, etc.).

Our field experiment establishes that advisors provide more information on work/life balance issues to female students. Using this framework, three motivations could lead professionals to provide different information to male and female students. First, professionals could be altruistic and believe that U differs on average by gender, because female students value work/life balance more than male students and/or female students are more misinformed about this issue than male students. Second, professionals could be paternalistic and believe that $\tilde{U}$ differs from U for women. This could arise if professionals believe that female students will experience unforeseen changes in their preferences, likely surrounding the birth of their first child (Paul, 2014; Kuziemko et al., 2018). A final possibility is that professionals have an agenda distinct from student utility and provide information to satisfy their non-empathetic motives. In the subsections below, we discuss how the experimental design as well as two additional surveys allow us to distinguish between the sources of differential information provision to male and female students.

5.2 Pure altruism

Purely altruistic professionals maximize students' utility when providing information ($\gamma = 1$ and $\alpha = 1$). If professionals are purely altruistic, then their emphasis on work/life balance to women should be driven by beliefs that female students want this information more than male students. Our specific and factual experimental treatments suggest that this is not the complete explanation for the gender gap: even when students specifically ask about work/life balance issues, professionals differentiate their advice by student gender.

Using two additional surveys, we show that the information that professionals provide is inconsistent with both student preferences for information and professionals' beliefs about student preferences for information.[33] First, we conducted a survey of students from the same university that asks students how they would allocate 15 minutes of time with a professional in their preferred career path among various career-related topics.[34] While all students are interested in discussing work/life balance with a professional, men allocate 14 percent of their time and women allocate 10 percent of their time to this topic, a statistically significant difference (Figure 3).[35] The information professionals supply does not match students' preferences.

[33]Professionals can be incorrect about student preferences and still be altruistic (they act according to what they believe student preferences, U, are).

[34]See Appendix E.3 for the follow-up survey.

[35]A recent New York Times article also notes this gender reversal in preferences for work/life balance among 18-29 year olds. `https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/17/style/generation-z-millennials-work-life-balance.html`

Second, we conducted a survey and vignette study on Prolific among more than than 2,500 U.S. college graduates. Respondents were shown characteristics of a job, told to imagine that this was their former employer, and that they were providing information about the job to an applicant.[36] The job was described as having extremely long and unpredictable hours. The applicant was described as a recent college graduate from a top university. The applicant's other characteristics varied across a number of treatments.[37] We discuss the details of the treatments below. After being shown the characteristics of the applicant, professionals were asked how they would allocate 15 minutes discussing the hypothetical new job with the applicant among eight topics: daily tasks on the job, career trajectory/growth, skill/education requirements, compensation, comparison with other jobs in the field, workplace culture, hours, and job stability. Next, we asked professionals what they think the college graduate wants to discuss, allocating time across the same eight topics. Finally, professionals were asked directly about their motivations for giving information about work/life balance to young people.

We find that professionals spend 14 percent more time on work/life balance than they believe young people want, and the gap between what professionals provide and what students in our above survey actually want is even larger. Together, these results suggest that professionals purposefully provide more information on work/life balance than they believe students want.[38]

5.3 Paternalism

Paternalistic professionals ($0 \leq \gamma < 1$) believe that students' utility should be $\tilde{U}$, which differs from students' utility U. This difference could arise due to professionals' belief that students will experience unanticipated changes to their utility in the future, that students should place more weight on future considerations than they currently do, or that there are parts of the utility function that are unknown to students.

Using the vignette study of professionals on Prolific, we further investigate the potential role for paternalism in explaining the gender gap in information provision. We randomize the gender of the job applicant to be either male (Ethan) or female (Emily). Then we test how professionals' information provision responds to four conditions.[39]

[36] Appendix Figure A4 displays the job description.

[37] In order to make the applicant characteristics salient to respondents, we presented each characteristic one at a time on a separate screen, alongside a representative image.

[38] Our result is consistent with several other papers that document inaccurate or exaggerated beliefs about others' attributes and preferences (Bordalo et al., 2016; Eyal and Epley, 2017; Bohren et al., 2019, 2022; Exley et al., 2022). However, exaggerated beliefs do not seem to be the only reason that professionals' information provision deviates from student preferences. Professionals provide more information on work/life balance than *they believe* students want.

[39] The vignette study was pre-registered on the AEA Registry under: AEARCTR-0013302.

1. Control: Basic information on job applicant, including that they are a recent college graduate who majored in economics.

2. Treatment jobseeker preferences: Include information that students like Ethan (Emily) rank work/life balance information among the top (bottom) three topics they would like to discuss.[40]

3. Treatment children: Include information that the jobseeker does not want to have children.

4. Treatment recruitment: Include information that the professional wants to recruit women to the firm (Emily only).

We estimate the following regression:

$$Time_k = \delta_0 + Treat_k'\delta_1 + e_k \tag{2}$$

where $Treat_k$ is a vector of indicators for the conditions described above and $Time$ is is the number of minutes professional k allocates to discussing hours with the new labor market entrant, or the amount of time that professional k believes the new labor market entrant wants to spend discussing hours. We separately estimate the specification for Ethan and Emily.

The effects of these treatments on time spent discussing the job's hours are reported in Table 6. Our first finding is that professionals do not change their time allocation for Emily in response to the three treatments (column 1). However, professionals' beliefs about what Emily wants to discuss do change. They believe that Emily wants to discuss hours on the job significantly less if she does not want to have kids and when provided information that Emily does not want to talk about hours on the job (column 2). Since professionals' time allocation is not sensitive to changes in what they believe Emily wants to discuss, their information provision is consistent with paternalism, relying on $\tilde{U}$ rather than U. In contrast, professionals are quite responsive to the treatments for Ethan in their time allocation (column 4).[41,42]

[40] This information was sourced from the survey of college students described in Section 5.2.

[41] In the control condition, we find that professions allocate a similar amount of time to discussing hours with Emily and Ethan (2.34 versus 2.37 minutes). In the condition in which Emily and Ethan state that they do not want to have children, professionals provide more information to Emily than Ethan about the hours on the job (2.41 versus 2.19 minutes). We cannot make informative comparisons for Ethan and Emily in the other two treatments, since the treatments differed for Ethan and Emily. We also note that across treatments, we find similar effects by professional gender (Appendix Tables A27 and A28).

[42] The "no children" treatment also tests whether professionals altruistically provide women with more information on work/life balance because they believe that young women are more misinformed than young men. The "no children" treatment signals that Emily has a lower valuation of reduced work hours, implying that professionals should be less inclined to provide information to address misperceptions. However, professionals continue to discuss hours with her at the same rate as in the control condition.

Why might professionals act paternalistically toward female students? Prior literature suggests that women are more likely than men to experience unanticipated changes in their preferences. For example, Kuziemko et al. (2018) document that women do not accurately forecast changes in their preferences upon having children. Knowing this, advisors could emphasize work/life balance issues to female students that will become relevant in the future. In our main field experiment, we observe that female professionals—who are presumably more knowledgeable about future challenges female students will face—are particularly likely to emphasize these issues to female students. When answering the broad question, female professionals are more likely than male professionals to bring up work/life balance issues, and this is especially the case when responding to female students.[43] In addition, when answering the specific question on whether work/life balance is a concern in the professional's career path, there is suggestive evidence that female professionals are less likely to refute this concern when responding to female students (Appendix Figure A3).

In the Prolific survey, professionals' open-ended responses reveal that they believe that work/life balance information is important for women due to family considerations, particularly those that materialize in the future. In the survey, professionals are asked an open-ended question on whether and why it is important to discuss work/life balance with young individuals, separately for young men and young women. Nearly all respondents (95 percent) agree that it is important to discuss work/life balance, with slightly (but significantly) higher rates for young women than for young men. Furthermore, when asked why it is important to discuss work/life balance, 32 percent of professionals give different reasons for young women and young men. When professionals cite different reasons for men and women, 41 percent cite family considerations for women, while just 18 percent mention this for men (measured using the keywords "family," "child" and "kids"). These responses often emphasize the importance of this information for the future, and more so for women than for men—49 percent vs. 18 percent. As one surveyed professional stated, "[it is important to provide young women with information on work/life balance because] they may not be thinking of having a family at a younger age but those things will be important when they do."

Overall, we conclude that professionals exhibit paternalism, especially when providing information to female students. They purposefully bring up work/life balance to young people more than they believe young people want, and, in the case of young women, professionals discuss work/life balance even when they *know* that women are not interested in this topic.

[43]Female and male professionals mention work/life balance to male students at similar rates (0.079 v. 0.063, respectively), but when responding to female students, female professionals bring up work/life balance at almost twice the rate of male professionals (0.22 and 0.13, respectively). We are under-powered to detect the difference in the gender gap in mentioning work/life balance by professional gender (Appendix Table A18).

5.4 Non-empathetic preferences

Finally, professionals could have other considerations unrelated to student welfare—non-empathetic preferences (S)—that guide their information provision. These considerations could differ for female students, if, for example, professionals want to recruit female students to their workplace or profession to fulfill gender diversity goals. Our field experiment tries to shut down this motivation by stating in the message to professionals that the student is not currently looking for a job. We explore this motive directly in the vignette study of professionals on Prolific. In Table 6, we show that professionals' time allocated to discussing the job's extremely long and unpredictable hours with Emily does not change with the social objective treatment, that is, when the professional is informed that they want to recruit more women to the firm. It remains possible that professionals could emphasize work/life balance to women due to other forms of non-empathetic preferences, such as working through their own problems (Eskreis-Winkler et al., 2018).

5.5 Student awareness and response

While not part of our conceptual framework, it is possible that students filter professionals' responses accounting for potential bias, thereby attenuating any effects of gender gaps in information provision. In our survey of the same student population, we find that 56 percent of students are unaware that women receive more information on work/life balance; male students are more likely to be unaware than female students (62 percent versus 51 percent).[44] For the majority of students who are unaware of these information gaps, it is unlikely that they will obtain information that maximizes U.[45]

Another way that student behavior may ameliorate the effects of student gender on information provision is through student selection of professionals. If students could choose which professionals they contact, would the information they receive align with their reported preferences? Before students sent messages, we asked them to rank professionals based on whom they would most prefer to ask the questions in the study. Using these student rankings, we estimate a rank-ordered logit choice model for student preferences over professional characteristics (Beggs et al., 1981). We then re-weight the main specification using the predicted probabilities that a professional is ranked.[46] Additional details are found in Appendix D. If students were to select professionals on their own, we find that there would be an even larger gender disparity in information received on work/life balance.

[44] We thank Christine Exley for this helpful suggestion.

[45] For example, in responses to our factual question, point estimates suggest that female students are more likely to receive exaggerated quotes of hours requirements for lawyers. If students are aware of this, then they can potentially infer the true hours requirements.

[46] A similar re-weighting exercise is implemented in Agan et al. (2021).

6 Consequences of Gender Gaps in Information

Our field experiment finds that professionals emphasize work/life balance information to female students. Does this disparate information provision contribute to gender gaps in career outcomes? Combining the findings from our field experiment, results from an information intervention, and extensive evidence of the importance of temporal demands in job selection, we show that gender gaps in information about work/life balance are consequential for gender gaps in career choice.

6.1 Evidence from the field experiment

In the main field experiment, because professionals are randomly assigned to students, we are able to assess the effect of being randomly assigned a professional who brings up work/life balance (conditional on student observables) on students' career plans. At the conclusion of the study, we surveyed students about their career plans. Of the 76 students in the main sample, 73 completed the survey. We measure whether a student indicates he/she is, relative to the start of the study, less likely to enter his/her preferred career path. Students were asked, "Relative to when you began sending messages for this study, are you, on a scale of 1–10, much less likely (1) ... much more likely (10) to go into [data science/finance/law/management consulting]?" We run the following regression:

$$L_i = \gamma_0 + WL_i'\gamma_1 + X_i'\gamma_2 + M_i'\gamma_3 + P_i'\gamma_4 + \varepsilon_i \tag{3}$$

where L_i, is an indicator for responses of 4 or below to this question for student i's preferred career path or the reverse of the scale described above (where 10 indicates least likely). WL_i is a vector including an indicator for whether a student received a response to the work/life balance question in their preferred career path, as well as an indicator for whether the student received a work/life balance mention in their preferred career path, X_i is a vector of student characteristics, including the basic student controls, race, and student's preferred career path, M_i includes characteristics of the messages received by student i, such as message length and whether the student received information about workplace culture, and P_i is a vector of the average characteristics of professionals the student contacted in their preferred career path.

In Table 7, we find that being randomly assigned a professional who brings up work/life balance deters students from their preferred career path. Specifically, receiving a response to the work/life balance question makes students significantly less likely to go into their preferred career path. The results are directionally similar when students receive a mention of work/life balance in response to the broad question, though the effect is insignificant. This result is similar whether the outcome variable is an indicator of being deterred or the continuous scale. These effects are robust to

controlling for other message and professional characteristics (columns 2-3 and 5-6) and as well as other parameterizations of message content (Appendix Table A29).[47] Although the analysis is suggestive due to the large standard errors stemming from the small number of students, the results indicate that the information professionals provide matter for stated career choices.

6.2 Evidence from an information intervention

To provide additional evidence on the link between gender gaps in work/life balance information and gender gaps in career outcomes, we conduct an information intervention with over 400 UCLA undergraduate students.[48] The experiment focuses on management consulting, one of the four career paths from our main field experiment. Management consulting has broad appeal among undergraduate students and its applicant pool draws from a wide swath of student majors. In addition, in our main field experiment, management consultants frequently bring up work/life balance issues when discussing the pros and cons of entering the field (23 percent of responses mention it).

We recruited students who were likely interested in management consulting through large introductory economics courses and various major listservs.[49] In the survey, students are given a brief introduction to management consulting. Next, the survey indicates that students will receive information about the pros and cons of management consulting from management consultant who graduated from a top university.[50] We sourced the information from one of the messages that a student received in our main field experiment. We randomize students to receive one of two versions of the message: (1) a control message, which contains no work/life balance information or (2) a treatment message, which is identical to control but includes work/life balance information. The control message states:

> It's great that you're getting a head start on understanding your possible fields of interest. Some quick thoughts per your request. Advantages: Fast-paced learning environment where you quickly get exposure to high level people and strategic issues. High standards help you immediately upskill in the basics like PPT, excel, Tableau.

[47] We note that most students state that they are more likely to go into their preferred career path at the end of the study, relative to the start of the study. We focus on deterrence because the vast majority of work/life balance information that students receive is negative. When we look more holistically at the distribution of preferences, we can reject that the distributions of responses to the career plans question are the same for students who did and did not receive a mention of work/life balance (p-value of 0.07).

[48] The experiment was pre-registered through the AEA Registry under AEARCTR-0013537.

[49] Specifically, economics, statistics, psychology, math, political science, and public policy.

[50] The survey states that the consultant was asked the following question "Hello! As of right now I'm not actively searching for a job, but I'm hoping to learn as much as I can about working in management consulting so that I have a realistic grasp of the field. Could you share your quick thoughts on the advantages and challenges in management consulting?" Note that this is identical to the question that students asked professionals in our main field experiment.

> Consultants bond very quickly and very deeply; you and your team and your office will become a very close-knit social circle. Challenges: The pay feels good compared to other entry level jobs but it's actually often not worth it if you have any coding or tech skills that will get you in at a tech salary. Hopefully that helps you get a feel for what to expect!

The treatment message additionally includes:

> It is very hard to feel like you have roots anywhere because you "live" everywhere. It is even harder to get your non-consulting friends to understand what your life looks and feels like, and you may feel alienated because in their mind you're never around so they stop acting like you are unless you remind them. It is difficult to maintain a relationship with someone long-distance or who does not understand what you do. It can be very high-burn (60-80+ hours/week). Travel is not always a good thing (i.e. if you're going to the middle of nowhere and have to take two planes and then drive an hour twice per week; I've avoided this but that is the literal schedule my best friend at the firm had for 1.5 years).[51]

Students were shown a written version of the message and also provided with an audio recording. After students read and listened to the message, we elicited their beliefs about two non-wage amenities related to the temporal demands of management consulting:

1. Hours worked per week: Average of hours worked per week during your first year as a management consultant (non-incentivized).

2. Part-time work availability: Consider the top management consulting firm in the U.S. What fraction of their management consultants do you think worked part-time in 2024? (incentivized: student was informed that they would receive a bonus payment if within 5 percentage points of correct answer, which is 8.5 percent)

To estimate the effects of work/life balance information on students' beliefs about these two temporal attributes, we use the following regression specification:

$$H_i = \lambda_0 + \lambda_1 T_i + \varepsilon_i \tag{4}$$

where T_i indicates whether student i was randomized into the treatment group that received work/life balance information and H_i is the outcome of interest, beliefs about hours worked or beliefs

[51] Note that the treatment message is longer than the control message. To test whether survey length matters for students' beliefs, half of the control group was randomized to answer an additional question on their classes for the next quarter. The effects of the treatment are invariant to the inclusion of this additional question.

about part-time work availability in management consulting, measured after the intervention. We estimate the regression separately by student gender.

Table 8 reports the effects of the treatment on students' beliefs about the temporal attributes of management consulting, overall and by student gender. Information on work/life balance in management consulting causes a 6.03 hour (or 11.8 percent) increase in students' beliefs about the average number of hours they will work during their first year as a consultant (column 1).[52] The shift is similar for male and female students (columns 2 and 3, respectively). We also observe that the information alters the incentivized outcome, students' beliefs about the availability of part-time work. The treatment induces a 7.08 percentage point (or 22.8 percent) decline in beliefs about the fraction of management consultants who work part-time, with the shift larger for men than for women.

Our main field experiment documents that work/life balance issues are emphasized to female students. The information intervention among UCLA undergraduates shows that such information shifts students' beliefs about the temporal attributes of jobs. A remaining question is whether beliefs about the temporal demands of jobs affect female students' job choices. Extensive research shows that (1) women prefer jobs with time flexibility more so than men and (2) gender differences in preferences translate into gender gaps in real choices, including career paths and jobs. For example, Wiswall and Zafar (2018) show that women are willing to give up $5,500 in annual earnings for a job that has a part-time option and $993 in annual earnings for a reduction of one hour per week. Furthermore, these preferences are correlated with the attributes of their actual job choices. Mas and Pallais (2017), Eriksson and Kristensen (2014), and Bustelo et al. (2023) document that women have a willingness to pay (WTP) for a more flexible job and to avoid unpredictable work hours.[53] Using a nationally representative sample of the U.S. population, Maestas et al. (2019) estimate that women have a higher WTP than men for jobs with 10 or 20 days of paid time off. Wasserman (2023) shows that women are more likely to choose a medical specialty when its weekly hours are reduced. Goldin and Katz (2016) discuss the evolution of the pharmacy industry away from long, inflexible hours and the subsequent entry of women into pharmacy studies.

We carefully designed the information intervention to emulate the participant pool and type of work studied in this literature. The participants in our experiment are very similar to those in Wiswall and Zafar (2018)—NYU undergraduate students vs. UCLA undergraduate students, both considering their future jobs. In addition, management consultants work extremely long hours

[52] As stated in the pre-analysis plan, we impose two sample restrictions: (1) drop students who take the survey multiple times and (2) drop students who report that they expect to work less than 10 hours per week in management consulting.

[53] Other work documents that women are also more sensitive than men to the match quality of jobs, as communicated through skill requirements in job postings (Abraham et al., forthcoming; Coffman et al., 2023).

during their early careers, similar to the physician population studied by Wasserman (2023). Given the similarities in the participant pool and type of work, we conclude from the combination of our information intervention and existing research on how beliefs affect choices that gender differences in the provision of work/life balance information are likely consequential for gender gaps in career choices.[54]

As a final exercise, we quantify the importance of gender gaps in information provision using the following back-of-the-envelope calculation. Suppose a student talks to seven professionals before deciding on a career.[55] If each professional is an independent draw and brings up work/life balance at the rates seen in our main field experiment, then the expected number of conversations that bring up work/life balance for female students is one, and for male students is 0.5. If the female student updates her beliefs about hours according to our information intervention, then these conversations will increase her expected hours of work by 6.19 hours. Combining this with the willingness to pay for fewer hours in Wiswall and Zafar (2018), the average female student would evaluate the same job as though it paid 7.9 percent less. In contrast after seven informal conversations, the average male student would evaluate the same job as though it paid 2.4 percent less.[56] In other words, the reduction in perceived compensation due to informal conversations is more than three times larger for women than for men.[57] Additional channels that we do not directly measure—such as endogenous preference formation resulting from repeated emphasis on work/life balance issues (Bowles, 1998; Ridgeway and Correll, 2004)—may amplify the effects of informal information.

7 Discussion and Conclusion

Information transmission through informal interactions is an everyday, routine occurrence. Using a large-scale field experiment with college students interested in career advice, this paper provides a window into informal exchanges and additionally sheds light on a subtle form of disparate treatment of individuals based on their gender. Our main finding is that professionals differentially emphasize work/life balance issues to female students. These gender differences in information provision matter: combining an information intervention with existing estimates of preferences for temporal

[54]Since information on work/life balance affects the beliefs of both men and women, if men respond more than women to beliefs about temporal demands of jobs, then gender gaps in information provision may not translate to gender gaps in career outcomes. We know of no study that finds this result, and all of the studies cited above find men to be no more (and generally less) sensitive than women in their choices concerning jobs with temporal flexibility.

[55]When we surveyed current college students about how many professionals they talk to about potential careers, the modal response was 4-6. We chose seven to provide a conservative estimate of gender differences.

[56]The calculation for women is: $0.97 \times 6.19 \times 1.31 = 7.87$. The calculation for men is: $0.47 \times 6.49 \times 0.78 = 2.38$.

[57]Note that the larger reduction for women arises due to the differential emphasis on work/life balance information and women's larger WTP for lower hours. If men received as much information on work/life balance as women, then informal conversations would reduce their valuation of the job by 4.91 percent. If, instead, men valued lower hours as much as women, then informal conversations would reduce their valuation of the job by 4.00 percent.

flexibility, we show that emphasizing a job's work/life balance issues steers female students away from the job.

The one-on-one conversations studied in this paper have the benefit of being tailored to the interests and preferences of the information seeker. Our evidence suggests, however, that professionals depart from the stated preferences of students and instead provide information paternalistically, based on beliefs about what female students should or will value in the future. Even paternalistic information provision could be beneficial: given that women do not fully anticipate how their preferences for working will change after having children, it is possible that professionals know the evolution of students' preferences better than they do themselves, leading to a more efficient allocation of workers to jobs.

Our discussion thus far has used a partial equilibrium perspective, taking the temporal demands of jobs as given. Another possibility is the entry of women into an occupation may change the way that work is structured and organized. For example, Goldin and Katz (2010) discusses how the entry of women into pediatrics may have led to structural changes that increased the availability of part-time work. By discouraging women from entering historically male-dominated fields, informal conversations with professionals may inadvertently hinder the evolution of the job characteristics they caution students about.

Information passed down from older to younger cohorts may also serve to perpetuate gender inequality, if changes in beliefs about work/family trade-offs lag behind technological changes that attenuate these trade-offs. Sociologists refer to this phenomenon as "cultural lag," in which gender inequality persists even when egalitarian options are viable due to the enduring transmission of traditional gender roles, which outlast the economic conditions that originally established them (Ogburn, 1957; Brinkman and Brinkman, 1997; Ridgeway, 2011). For example, professionals' information provision may not reflect the increased prevalence of remote work and how it affects the capacity of new female entrants to reconcile the competing demands of work and family life (Dingel and Neiman, 2020; Aksoy et al., 2022; Harrington and Kahn, 2023). Culture may also be slow to change because change is initially classified as an exception to a rule, before eventually becoming a new rule or norm (Hewstone, 1994).

Empirical evidence from economics shows remarkable persistence of the norms governing women's work and care-giving roles. For example, Alesina et al. (2013) document the persistence of gender norms rooted in historical agricultural plough use. Our paper isolates a specific mechanism potentially contributing to the persistence of norms: informal conversations that impart the societal expectation that women consider their future parental roles when making early career decisions.

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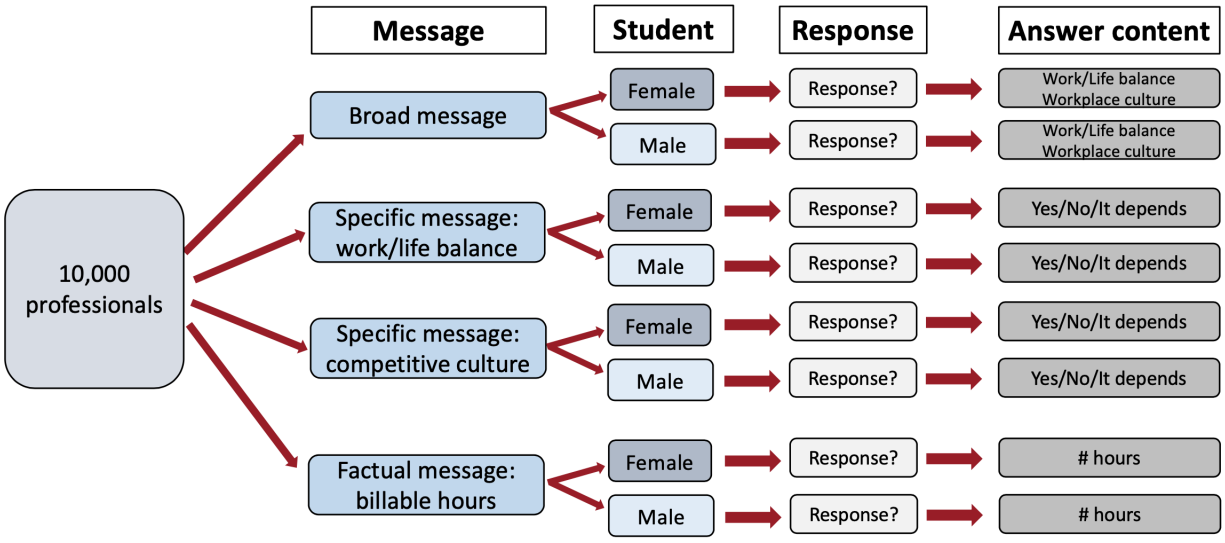
Figures and Tables

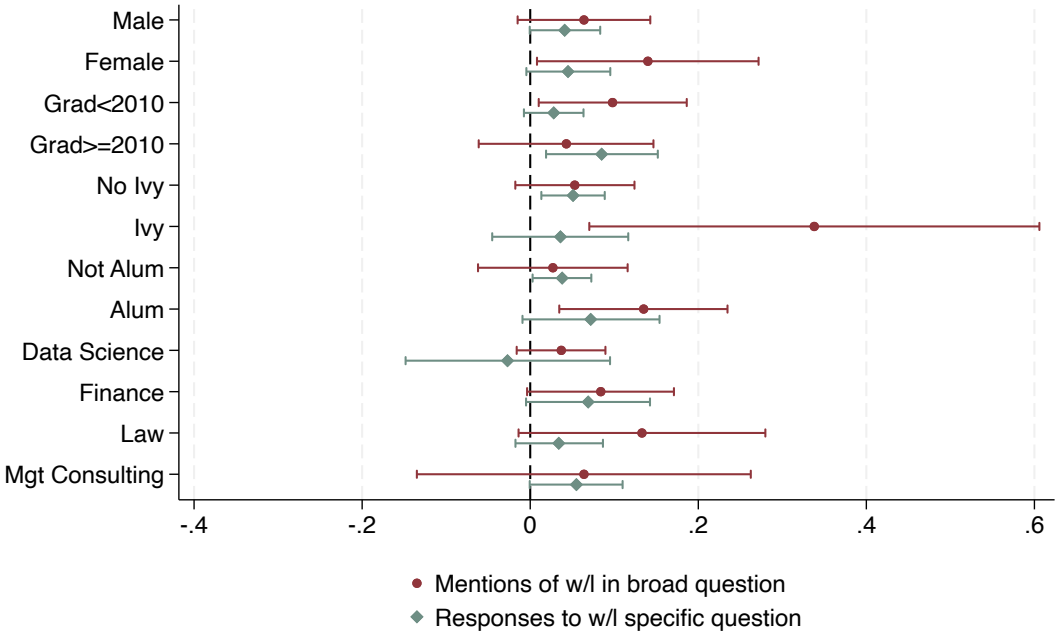
Figure 1: Experimental Design and Main Outcomes



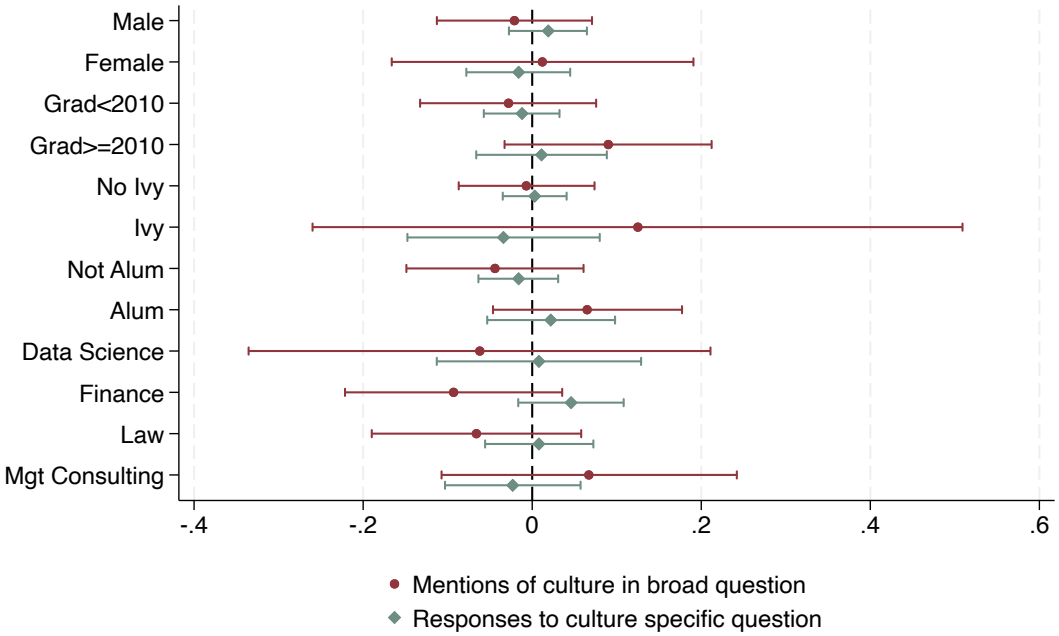
Note: This figure depicts the experimental design and main outcomes.

Figure 2: Heterogeneity in the Effects of Student Gender, by Professional Attributes

(a) Work/life Balance



(b) Workplace Culture



Note: This figure reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (1), in which the dependent variable is an indicator for whether a response to the broad question mentions work/life balance, whether a professional responds to the specific work/life balance question, whether a response to the broad question mentions workplace culture, or whether a professional responds to the specific competitive culture question, and the independent variables are an indicator for whether the student who sent the message is female, the professional's field, message time/date characteristics, student profile characteristics, and student race/ethnicity. The y-axis lists the subsample of professionals used for estimation. Each entry in the figure reports the estimated coefficient on student female from a separate specification, along with 95% confidence intervals clustered at the student level.

Figure 3: Student Demand for Career Information, by Student Gender

Note: This figure uses the follow-up survey of 151 undergraduates at the same university to depict student demand for career information, by topic and student gender. Each student was asked how they would allocate 15 minutes of time spent with a professional in their preferred career path among 8 career-related topics. The figure plots the average percentage of the 15 minutes allocated to each topic, separately for female and male students. The following gender contrasts are statistically significant at the 5 percent level: different types of jobs within the field and work/life balance.

Table 1: Student Summary Statistics

	All Students	Male	Female
Female	0.58		
	(0.50)		
Profile Information			
Expected Graduation Year	2022.24	2022.50	2022.05
	(1.04)	(0.95)	(1.08)
Economics	0.62	0.69	0.57
	(0.49)	(0.47)	(0.50)
STEM	0.22	0.25	0.20
	(0.42)	(0.44)	(0.41)
0-49 Connections	0.46	0.44	0.48
	(0.50)	(0.50)	(0.51)
50-249 Connections	0.28	0.25	0.30
	(0.45)	(0.44)	(0.46)
250+ Connections	0.26	0.31	0.23
	(0.44)	(0.47)	(0.42)
Profile Extra Info	0.47	0.56	0.41
	(0.50)	(0.50)	(0.50)
Profile Issue	0.07	0.03	0.09
	(0.25)	(0.18)	(0.29)
Demographic Information			
White/Caucasian	0.30	0.28	0.32
	(0.46)	(0.46)	(0.47)
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.37	0.31	0.41
	(0.49)	(0.47)	(0.50)
Other Race/Ethnicity	0.33	0.41	0.27
	(0.47)	(0.50)	(0.45)
Non-Profile Student Information			
GPA	3.64	3.62	3.65
	(0.28)	(0.34)	(0.24)
First Generation College Student	0.22	0.25	0.20
	(0.42)	(0.44)	(0.41)
Online Presence	0.71	0.66	0.75
	(0.46)	(0.48)	(0.44)
Observations	76	32	44

Note: This table reports means for each student characteristic, with standard deviations in parentheses.

Table 2: Professionals Summary Statistics

	All Professionals	Data Science	Finance	Law	Mgmt Consulting
Data Science	0.13				
	(0.33)				
Finance	0.28				
	(0.45)				
Law	0.33				
	(0.47)				
Mgmt Consulting	0.26				
	(0.44)				
Female	0.34	0.29	0.23	0.43	0.36
	(0.47)	(0.45)	(0.42)	(0.49)	(0.48)
College Graduation Year	2003.62	2009.55	2003.83	1998.31	2007.45
	(12.00)	(7.59)	(11.95)	(11.84)	(11.16)
College Selectivity - Admit Rate	0.25	0.39	0.25	0.20	0.28
	(0.22)	(0.28)	(0.22)	(0.16)	(0.23)
Alumni of Student's College	0.21	0.25	0.27	0.15	0.21
	(0.41)	(0.44)	(0.44)	(0.35)	(0.41)
Any Graduate Degree	0.70	0.72	0.50	1.00	0.51
	(0.46)	(0.45)	(0.50)	(0.00)	(0.50)
Any Ivy Degree	0.16	0.07	0.16	0.19	0.15
	(0.36)	(0.26)	(0.36)	(0.39)	(0.36)
0-249 Connections	0.11	0.13	0.10	0.15	0.05
	(0.31)	(0.33)	(0.30)	(0.36)	(0.21)
250-499 Connections	0.21	0.24	0.21	0.27	0.13
	(0.41)	(0.42)	(0.41)	(0.45)	(0.33)
500+ Connections	0.64	0.59	0.64	0.54	0.78
	(0.48)	(0.49)	(0.48)	(0.50)	(0.41)
Observations	7602	970	2156	2522	1954

Note: This table reports summary statistics for the sample of professionals, overall and by professional field. Means for each professional characteristic are reported, with standard deviations in parentheses. Appendix Table A2 conducts tests of randomization based on professionals' characteristics.

Table 3: Effect of Student Gender on Response Rates, By Question Type

	Broad Question			Work/Life Balance Question			Competitive Culture Question			Factual Question (Law Only)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
Student Female	0.011	0.014	0.013	0.037**	0.041***	0.040**	0.003	0.009	0.011	0.061*	0.059	0.060
	(0.010)	(0.011)	(0.010)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.016)	(0.015)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.032)	(0.036)	(0.039)
Finance	-0.055***	-0.055***	-0.055***	-0.118***	-0.118***	-0.118***	-0.094***	-0.094***	-0.093***			
	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.037)	(0.037)	(0.037)	(0.032)	(0.032)	(0.032)			
Law	-0.084***	-0.084***	-0.084***	-0.134***	-0.134***	-0.134***	-0.107***	-0.107***	-0.108***			
	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.032)	(0.033)	(0.033)	(0.033)	(0.033)	(0.033)			
Mgmt Consulting	-0.030*	-0.030*	-0.030*	-0.071**	-0.071**	-0.071**	-0.086***	-0.087***	-0.088***			
	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.017)	(0.032)	(0.032)	(0.032)	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.031)			
Male Mean	0.101			0.130			0.139			0.073		
Observations	3530	3530	3530	1763	1763	1763	1776	1776	1776	298	298	298
Message Time/Date	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Profile	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Race/Ethnicity		X	X		X	X		X	X		X	X
Non-Profile Student Controls			X			X			X			X

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (1), in which the dependent variable is an indicator for whether a message received a response, and the independent variables are an indicator for whether the student who sent the message is female, the professional's field, message time/date characteristics, and student profile characteristics. Separate regressions are estimated for each question type: broad, specific - work/life balance, specific - competitive culture, and factual. Columns 1, 4, 7, and 10 report results from the baseline specification. Columns 2, 5, 8, and 11 report results from a specification that additionally includes controls for student race/ethnicity. Columns 3, 6, 9, and 12 additionally include controls for student characteristics that may be observable elsewhere online. The omitted field is data science. Standard errors are clustered at the student level and are reported in parentheses.
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table 4: Effect of Student Gender on Mentions of Work/Life Balance and Workplace Culture

	Work/Life Balance Mention			Workplace Culture Mention		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Student Female	0.087***	0.072**	0.076**	-0.003	-0.024	-0.024
	(0.032)	(0.032)	(0.033)	(0.034)	(0.034)	(0.034)
Finance	0.013	0.017	0.012	-0.127**	-0.121**	-0.123**
	(0.028)	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.055)	(0.055)	(0.054)
Law	0.062	0.062	0.053	-0.172***	-0.170***	-0.173***
	(0.043)	(0.043)	(0.042)	(0.053)	(0.054)	(0.054)
Mgmt Consulting	0.208***	0.209***	0.209***	-0.074	-0.071	-0.073
	(0.051)	(0.052)	(0.051)	(0.060)	(0.060)	(0.061)
Male Mean	0.067			0.128		
Observations	363	363	363	363	363	363
Message Time/Date	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Profile	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Race/Ethnicity		X	X		X	X
Non-Profile Student Controls			X			X

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (1), in which the dependent variable is an indicator for whether a response to the broad question mentions work/life balance (columns 1-3) or workplace culture (columns 4-6), and the independent variables are an indicator for whether the student who sent the message is female, the professional's field, message time/date characteristics, and student profile characteristics. There are 363 responses to the broad question. Columns 1 and 4 report results from the baseline specification. Columns 2 and 5 report results from a specification that additionally includes controls for student race/ethnicity. Columns 3 and 6 additionally include controls for student characteristics that may be observable elsewhere online. The omitted field is data science. Standard errors are clustered at the student level and are reported in parentheses.
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table 5: Role of Professional Composition in Gender Differences in Responses to the Broad Question

	Broad Response Rate		Work/Life Balance Mention		Workplace Culture Mention	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Student Female	0.014	0.018	0.072**	0.057*	-0.024	-0.022
	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.032)	(0.033)	(0.034)	(0.039)
Finance	-0.055***	-0.056***	0.017	-0.014	-0.121**	-0.116*
	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.029)	(0.035)	(0.055)	(0.062)
Law	-0.084***	-0.061***	0.062	0.020	-0.170***	-0.222**
	(0.017)	(0.020)	(0.043)	(0.060)	(0.054)	(0.082)
Mgmt Consulting	-0.030*	-0.033*	0.209***	0.186***	-0.071	-0.067
	(0.018)	(0.019)	(0.052)	(0.053)	(0.060)	(0.063)
Observations	3530	3530	363	363	363	363
Message Time/Date	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Profile	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Race/Ethnicity	X	X	X	X	X	X
Professional		X		X		X

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (1), in which the dependent variable is an indicator for whether a message received a response (columns 1 and 2) or mentions of work/life balance (column 3 and 4) or workplace culture (columns 5 and 6) in the 363 responses to the broad question, and the independent variables are an indicator for whether the student who sent the message is female, the professional's field, message time/date characteristics, student profile characteristics, and student race/ethnicity. Columns 1, 3, and 5 report results from the preferred specification and are a reproduction of Table 3, column 2, and 4, columns 2 and 5. Columns 2, 4, and 6 report results from a specification that additionally includes controls for professional characteristics. The omitted field is data science. Standard errors are clustered at the student level and are reported in parentheses.
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table 6: Determinants of Professionals' Time Allocation, Beliefs, and the Wedge

	Emily			Ethan		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Minutes Allocated	Belief	Wedge	Minutes Allocated	Belief	Wedge
No Kids	0.07	-0.14*	0.21*	-0.18*	-0.09	-0.09
	(0.10)	(0.08)	(0.11)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.12)
Incorrect Priors	-0.12	-0.20*	0.07	0.36***	0.84***	-0.48***
	(0.11)	(0.10)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.12)	(0.12)
Social Objective	0.00	-0.06	0.06			
	(0.11)	(0.10)	(0.11)			
Control Mean	2.34	2.09	0.25	2.37	2.04	0.33
p-value for Emily/Ethan control mean diff	0.76	0.58	0.47			
Observations	1454	1454	1454	1118	1118	1118

Note: This table reports the results of a regression in which the dependent variable is either the professional's minutes allocated to discussing hours, the professional's belief about students' desired minutes allocated to discussing hours, or the difference between minutes allocated and the belief ("wedge"). For the Emily (Ethan) specifications, the independent variables are indicator variables for the three (two) treatment arms, with the control condition the omitted category. Robust standard errors are reported in parentheses.
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table 7: Effect of Information Received on Career Plans:
Is the Student Less Likely to Enter Preferred Career Path?

	Less Likely to Enter (binary)			Less Likely to Enter (continuous)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Response Mentioned W/L Balance	0.185	0.189	0.226	0.340	0.600	0.810
	(0.136)	(0.160)	(0.150)	(0.933)	(0.967)	(0.996)
Received Response to W/L Question	0.079*	0.079*	0.116	1.018**	1.008**	1.103*
	(0.043)	(0.044)	(0.078)	(0.444)	(0.443)	(0.603)
Response Mentioned Workplace Culture		-0.004	0.008		-0.264	-0.033
		(0.095)	(0.112)		(0.841)	(1.129)
Received Response to Culture Question		-0.007	-0.044		-0.922*	-1.015
		(0.071)	(0.075)		(0.496)	(0.615)
Male Mean	0.000			3.710		
Observations	73	73	73	73	73	73
Industry Controls	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Controls	X	X	X	X	X	X
Message Controls		X	X		X	X
Professional Controls			X			X

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (3), in which the dependent variable is an indicator for whether a student is dissuaded from her preferred career path, relative to the start of the study, and the independent variables are whether the student received any information on work/life balance in her preferred career path, characteristics listed on the student's profile, and the student's preferred career path. Column 2 includes whether the student received any information on workplace culture in her preferred career path and response length. Column 3 includes all previously listed controls as well as the characteristics of the professionals. Robust standard errors are reported in parentheses.
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table 8: Information Intervention: Effect of Work/Life Balance Information on Beliefs

	Beliefs about Average Hours			Beliefs about Part-time Availability		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	All Students	Male	Female	All Students	Male	Female
Received W/L Balance Info	6.03***	6.49***	6.19***	-7.08***	-11.36***	-5.93**
	(1.49)	(2.37)	(1.86)	(1.97)	(3.08)	(2.49)
Control Mean	50.92	53.27	49.57	31.05	30.10	31.72
Observations	413	142	263	413	142	263

Note: This table reports the results of a regression in which the dependent variable is either a student's beliefs about average hours worked in management consulting or students' beliefs about the the fraction of management consultants who work part-time. Beliefs about part-time availability were incentivized, through a bonus payment if the student's response was within 5 percentage points of the correct answer. The independent variable is an indicator for whether the student is in the treatment group, that is, received information on work/life balance in management consulting. Specifications are run separately for all students (columns 1 and 4), male students (columns 2 and 5), and female students (columns 3 and 6). The overall sample size is larger than the sum of the male and female sample sizes, due to 8 non-binary students. Robust standard errors are reported in parentheses.
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

A Online Appendix Figures and Tables

Figure A1: Message Templates

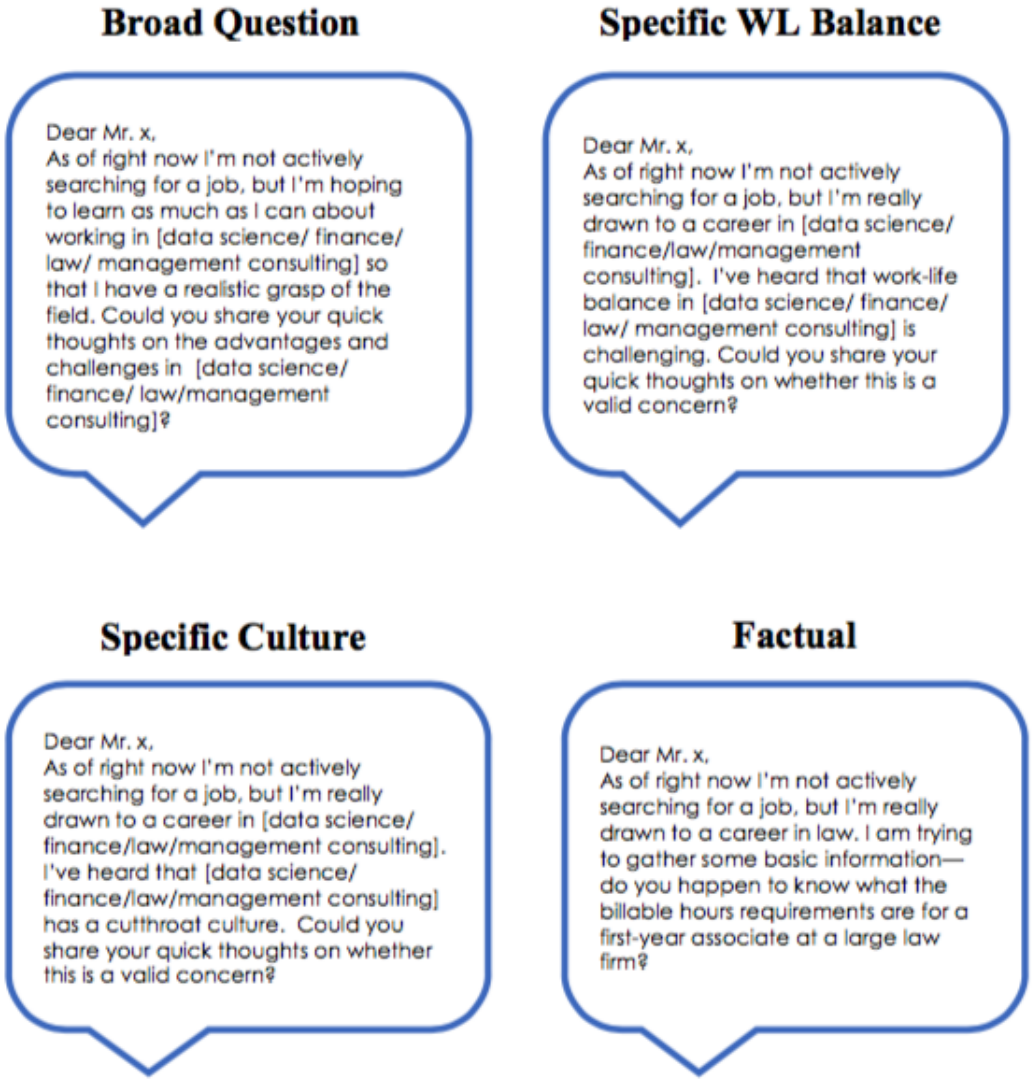
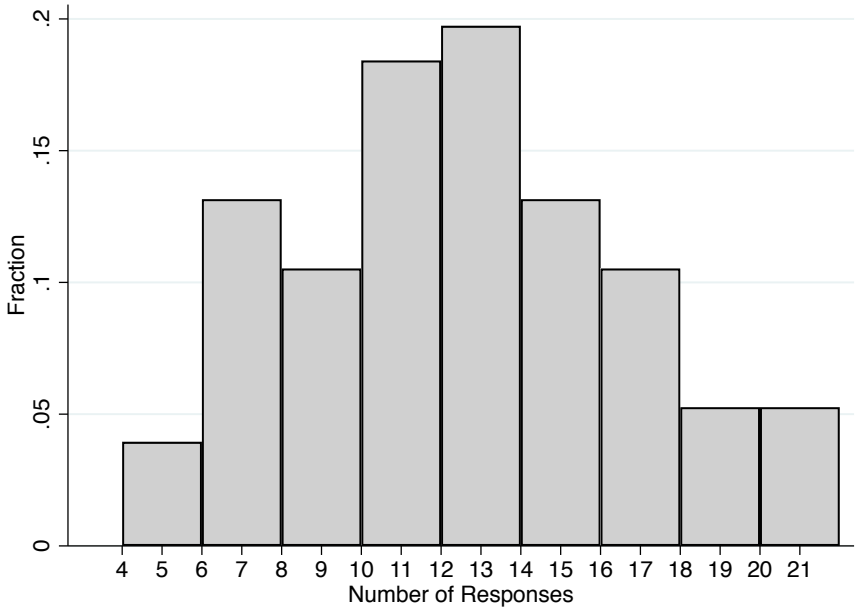
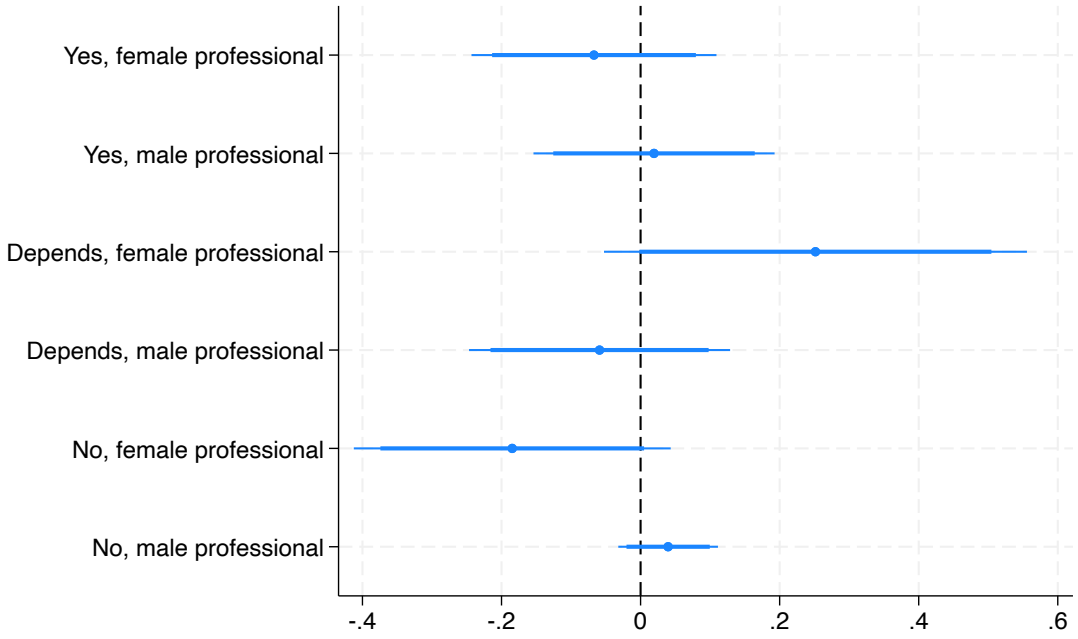


Figure A2: Distribution of Number of Responses



Note: This figure plots the distribution of the number of responses received across the 76 students in our analysis sample.

Figure A3: Effect of Student Gender on Answers to the Specific Work/Life Balance Question



Note: This figure reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (1), in which the dependent variable is an indicator of whether the professional answered the specific work/life balance in the way indicated on the y-axis, and the independent variables are an indicator for whether the student who sent the message is female, the professional's field, message time/date characteristics, student profile characteristics, and student race/ethnicity. Each point estimate plots the coefficient on student female, along with 90 (thin line) and 95 (thick line) percent confidence intervals, where standard errors are clustered at the student level.

Figure A4: Job Characteristics from Vignette Study

Daily tasks on the job:	**stimulating** projects that allowed for **professional development**
Career trajectory/growth:	experience at this firm is **valued** by other employers
Skill/education requirements:	entry-level position that requires a **college degree**
Compensation:	great **salary and benefits**
Comparison with other jobs in the field:	good job **relative** to other entry-level positions
Workplace culture:	**collegial** environment
Hours:	extremely **long** and **unpredictable** hours
Job stability:	Difficult to be promoted at this employer, so people typically **leave after a few years**

Note: This figure presents the job description from the vignette study.

Table A1: Outcome Summary Statistics

	All Messages	Broad	Specific - Work/Life	Specific - Culture	Factual
Response Rate	0.12	0.10	0.14	0.15	0.11
	(0.33)	(0.30)	(0.35)	(0.36)	(0.32)
Response Character Count	434.73	414.39	486.64	429.95	304.18
	(558.77)	(687.34)	(492.37)	(396.61)	(553.03)
Work/Life Balance Mentioned		0.11			
		(0.32)			
Workplace Culture Mentioned		0.12			
		(0.33)			
Valid concern?					
Yes			0.44	0.16	
			(0.50)	(0.37)	
It depends			0.49	0.54	
			(0.50)	(0.50)	
No			0.07	0.30	
			(0.26)	(0.46)	
Billable Hours Quoted					1989.00
					(77.42)
Observations	7367	3530	1763	1776	298

Note: This table reports summary statistics for the main outcomes, overall and by question type. Means for each outcome are reported, with standard deviations in parentheses.

Table A2: Tests of Randomization

	(1) All Messages	(2) Sent Messages Only
Data Science	0.000	-0.000
	(0.001)	(0.002)
Finance	0.000	-0.003
	(0.001)	(0.004)
Law	-0.000	0.008
	(0.001)	(0.008)
Mgmt Consulting	-0.001	-0.005
	(0.001)	(0.004)
Professional Female	0.004	0.004
	(0.012)	(0.012)
0-249 Connections	0.004	0.004
	(0.007)	(0.008)
250-499 Connections	0.017*	0.021**
	(0.010)	(0.010)
500+ Connections	-0.015	-0.018
	(0.012)	(0.012)
College graduation year	0.311	0.208
	(0.321)	(0.320)
Alumni of Student's College	-0.003	-0.005
	(0.010)	(0.011)
Undergraduation Selectivity Quartile 1	-0.009	-0.012
	(0.008)	(0.008)
Undergraduation Selectivity Quartile 2	0.008	0.008
	(0.009)	(0.009)
Undergraduation Selectivity Quartile 3	0.005	0.008
	(0.011)	(0.012)
Undergraduation Selectivity Quartile 4	0.007	0.006
	(0.008)	(0.008)
Any Graduate Degree	0.008	0.011
	(0.010)	(0.011)
Any Ivy Degree	0.003	0.002
	(0.008)	(0.008)
N	7602	7367

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of a regression specification, in which the dependent variable is a professional characteristic, listed in the rows, and the independent variable is indicator for whether the student who sent the message to the professional is female. Each entry represents the estimated coefficient from a separate specification. Column 1 reports the results for all messages that were assigned to students. Column 2 reports the results for the subset of messages that students actually sent. Standard errors are clustered at the student level and are reported in parentheses.
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A3: Effect of Student Gender on Response Rates, By Question Type
Including Students with Ambiguously Gendered Names

	Broad Question			Work/Life Balance Question			Competitive Culture Question			Factual Question (Law Only)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
Student Female	0.011	0.015	0.016	0.040**	0.046***	0.046***	0.001	0.008	0.008	0.072**	0.092***	0.088**
	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.015)	(0.016)	(0.017)	(0.014)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.030)	(0.035)	(0.035)
Finance	-0.051***	-0.051***	-0.051***	-0.120***	-0.120***	-0.120***	-0.092***	-0.092***	-0.092***			
	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.034)	(0.034)	(0.034)	(0.030)	(0.030)	(0.030)			
Law	-0.081***	-0.082***	-0.081***	-0.134***	-0.134***	-0.134***	-0.098***	-0.099***	-0.099***			
	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.030)	(0.030)	(0.030)	(0.030)	(0.030)	(0.030)			
Mgmt Consulting	-0.031*	-0.032**	-0.031**	-0.072**	-0.072**	-0.073**	-0.077***	-0.078***	-0.079***			
	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.028)			
Male Mean	0.099			0.130			0.139			0.071		
Observations	4147	4147	4147	2063	2063	2063	2081	2081	2081	350	350	350
Message Time/Date	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Profile	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Race/Ethnicity		X	X		X	X		X	X		X	X
Non-Profile Student Controls			X			X			X			X

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (1), in which the dependent variable is an indicator for whether a message received a response, and the independent variables are an indicator for whether the student who sent the message is female, the professional's field, message time/date characteristics, and student profile characteristics. The sample is expanded to include the 13 students with ambiguously gendered names. Separate regressions are estimated for each question type: broad, specific - work/life balance, specific - competitive culture, and factual. Columns 1, 4, 7, and 10 report results from the baseline specification. Columns 2, 5, 8, and 11 report results from a specification that additionally includes controls for student race/ethnicity. Columns 3, 6, 9, and 12 additionally include controls for student characteristics that may be observable elsewhere online. The omitted field is data science. Standard errors are clustered at the student level and are reported in parentheses.
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A4: Effect of Student Gender on Response Rates, By Question Type
Including Students with Ambiguously Gendered Names: Additional Specifications

	Broad Question			Work/Life Balance Question			Competitive Culture Question			Factual Question(Law Only)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
Student Female	0.003	0.009	0.011	0.025	0.030*	0.040**	0.011	0.012	0.001	0.073**	0.075**	0.072**
	(0.011)	(0.009)	(0.010)	(0.017)	(0.016)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.032)	(0.031)	(0.030)
Finance		-0.051***	-0.051***		-0.120***	-0.120***		-0.092***	-0.092***			
		(0.016)	(0.016)		(0.034)	(0.034)		(0.030)	(0.030)			
Law		-0.081***	-0.081***		-0.135***	-0.134***		-0.098***	-0.098***			
		(0.015)	(0.015)		(0.030)	(0.030)		(0.031)	(0.030)			
Mgmt Consulting		-0.031*	-0.031*		-0.073**	-0.072**		-0.076***	-0.077***			
		(0.016)	(0.016)		(0.031)	(0.031)		(0.028)	(0.028)			
Male Mean	0.099			0.130			0.139			0.071		
Observations	4147	4147	4147	2063	2063	2063	2081	2081	2081	350	350	350
Message Time/Date		X	X		X	X		X	X		X	X
Student Profile			X			X			X			X

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (1), in which the dependent variable is an indicator for whether a message received a response, and the independent variable is an indicator for whether the student who sent the message is female. Column 2 adds controls for the professional's field, message time/date characteristics. Column 3 adds controls for student profile characteristics and is the baseline specification in Appendix Table A3. The sample is expanded to include the 13 students with ambiguously gendered names. Separate regressions are estimated for each question type: broad, specific - work/life balance, specific - competitive culture, and factual. The omitted field is data science. Standard errors are clustered at the student level and are reported in parentheses.
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A5: Effect of Student Gender on Response Rates, By Question Type: Additional Specifications

	Broad Question			Work/Life Balance Question			Competitive Culture Question			Factual Question (Law Only)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
Student Female	0.003	0.009	0.011	0.022	0.028*	0.037**	0.017	0.018	0.003	0.070**	0.072**	0.061*
	(0.011)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.017)	(0.016)	(0.015)	(0.016)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.033)	(0.033)	(0.032)
Finance		-0.055***	-0.055***		-0.118***	-0.118***		-0.094***	-0.094***			
		(0.017)	(0.018)		(0.037)	(0.037)		(0.032)	(0.032)			
Law		-0.084***	-0.084***		-0.135***	-0.134***		-0.106***	-0.107***			
		(0.017)	(0.017)		(0.033)	(0.032)		(0.033)	(0.033)			
Mgmt Consulting		-0.030*	-0.030*		-0.072**	-0.071**		-0.084***	-0.086***			
		(0.018)	(0.018)		(0.033)	(0.032)		(0.031)	(0.031)			
Male Mean	0.101			0.130			0.139			0.073		
Observations	3530	3530	3530	1763	1763	1763	1776	1776	1776	298	298	298
Message Time/Date		X	X		X	X		X	X		X	X
Student Profile			X			X			X			X

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (1), in which the dependent variable is an indicator for whether a message received a response, and the independent variable is an indicator for whether the student who sent the message is female. Column 2 adds controls for the professional's field, message time/date characteristics. Column 3 adds controls for student profile characteristics and is the baseline specification in Table 3. Separate regressions are estimated for each question type: broad, specific - work/life balance, specific - competitive culture, and factual. The omitted field is data science. Standard errors are clustered at the student level and are reported in parentheses.
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A6: Effect of Student Gender on Response Rates, By Question Type
Restricting to Students with No Online Presence

	Broad Question			Work/Life Balance Question			Competitive Culture Question			Factual Question (Law Only)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
Student Female	0.031	0.043**	0.040*	0.048*	0.066**	0.087**	0.051	0.045	0.027	0.105***	0.077***	0.062***
	(0.018)	(0.020)	(0.023)	(0.027)	(0.030)	(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.044)	(0.050)	(0.035)	(0.016)	(0.021)
Finance	-0.113***	-0.114***	-0.114***	-0.056	-0.055	-0.053	-0.070	-0.070	-0.070			
	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.062)	(0.062)	(0.062)	(0.072)	(0.072)	(0.072)			
Law	-0.119***	-0.119***	-0.119***	-0.115*	-0.115*	-0.117*	-0.085	-0.085	-0.082			
	(0.039)	(0.039)	(0.039)	(0.057)	(0.058)	(0.058)	(0.065)	(0.065)	(0.064)			
Mgmt Consulting	-0.074*	-0.076*	-0.076*	-0.058	-0.063	-0.068	-0.053	-0.052	-0.047			
	(0.041)	(0.041)	(0.042)	(0.061)	(0.059)	(0.060)	(0.053)	(0.052)	(0.052)			
Male Mean	0.095			0.115			0.125			0.023		
Observations	1030	1030	1030	511	511	511	520	520	520	87	87	87
Message Time/Date	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Profile	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Race/Ethnicity		X	X		X	X		X	X		X	X
Non-Profile Student Controls			X			X			X			X

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (1), in which the dependent variable is an indicator for whether a message received a response, and the independent variables are an indicator for whether the student who sent the message is female, the professional's field, message time/date characteristics, and student profile characteristics. The sample is restricted to messages sent by students who do not have an online presence. Separate regressions are estimated for each question type: broad, specific - work/life balance, specific - competitive culture, and factual. Columns 1, 4, 7, and 10 report results from the baseline specification. Columns 2, 5, 8, and 11 report results from a specification that additionally includes controls for student race/ethnicity. Columns 3, 6, 9, and 12 additionally include controls for student characteristics that may be observable elsewhere online. The omitted field is data science. Standard errors are clustered at the student level and are reported in parentheses.
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A7: Effects of Student Gender on Information Received: Re-weighted to be Representative of Student Population by Race/Ethnicity and Gender

	Broad Q		Work/Life Balance Q		Competitive Culture Q		Factual (Law Only) Q		Mention W/L		Mention Culture	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
	Main	Weighted	Main	Weighted	Main	Weighted	Main	Weighted	Main	Weighted	Main	Weighted
Student Female	0.011	0.015	0.037**	0.038**	0.003	0.007	0.061*	0.081**	0.087***	0.077***	-0.003	-0.023
	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.016)	(0.032)	(0.034)	(0.032)	(0.029)	(0.034)	(0.031)
Finance	-0.055***	-0.049**	-0.118***	-0.126***	-0.094***	-0.100***			0.013	-0.003	-0.127**	-0.128**
	(0.018)	(0.020)	(0.037)	(0.037)	(0.032)	(0.033)			(0.028)	(0.026)	(0.055)	(0.056)
Law	-0.084***	-0.086***	-0.134***	-0.131***	-0.107***	-0.106***			0.062	0.048	-0.172***	-0.160***
	(0.017)	(0.020)	(0.032)	(0.035)	(0.033)	(0.036)			(0.043)	(0.041)	(0.053)	(0.049)
Mgmt Consulting	-0.030*	-0.031	-0.071**	-0.071**	-0.086***	-0.081**			0.208***	0.183***	-0.074	-0.069
	(0.018)	(0.021)	(0.032)	(0.034)	(0.031)	(0.035)			(0.051)	(0.049)	(0.060)	(0.061)
Male Mean	0.101		0.130		0.139		0.073		0.067		0.128	
Observations	3530	3530	1763	1763	1776	1776	298	298	363	363	363	363
Message Time/Date	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Profile	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (1), in which the dependent variable is an indicator for whether a message received a response or whether the response mentions work/life balance or workplace culture, and the independent variables are an indicator for whether the student who sent the message is female, the professional's field, message time/date characteristics, and student profile characteristics. Separate regressions are estimated for each question type and for mentions of work/life balance and workplace culture in responses to the broad question. Odd columns reproduce results from Tables 3 and 4. Even columns reweight the specifications so that the race/ethnicity and gender distribution is the same as the undergraduate population at the university where we conducted the study. Robust standard errors, clustered by student, are reported in parentheses.
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A8: Effect of Student Gender on Response Rates, By Question Type: Logit Specification

	Broad Question			Work/Life Balance Question			Competitive Culture Question			Factual Question (Law Only)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
Student Female	0.012	0.014	0.014	0.037**	0.041**	0.041**	0.004	0.010	0.011	0.070*	0.061	0.060
	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.010)	(0.016)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.016)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.037)	(0.042)	(0.041)
Male Mean	0.101			0.131			0.139			0.073		
Observations	3520	3520	3520	1749	1749	1749	1766	1766	1766	298	298	298
Message Time/Date	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Profile	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Race/Ethnicity		X	X		X	X		X	X		X	X
Non-Profile Student Controls			X			X			X			X

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (1) using logit, in which the dependent variable is an indicator for whether a message received a response, and the independent variables are an indicator for whether the student who sent the message is female, the professional's field, message time/date characteristics, and student profile characteristics. Separate regressions are estimated for each question type: broad, specific - work/life balance, specific - competitive culture, and factual. Average marginal effects are reported. Columns 1, 4, 7, and 10 report results from the baseline specification. Columns 2, 5, 8, and 11 report results from a specification that additionally includes controls for student race/ethnicity. Columns 3, 6, 9, and 12 additionally include controls for student characteristics that may be observable elsewhere online. The omitted field is data science. Standard errors are clustered at the student level and are reported in parentheses.

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A9: Effect of Student Gender on Response Rates, By Question Type: Probit Specification

	Broad Question			Work/Life Balance Question			Competitive Culture Question			Factual Question (Law Only)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
Student Female	0.012	0.014	0.014	0.039**	0.043***	0.042**	0.004	0.009	0.010	0.073**	0.067*	0.071*
	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.010)	(0.015)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.015)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.036)	(0.040)	(0.041)
Male Mean	0.101			0.131			0.139			0.073		
Observations	3520	3520	3520	1749	1749	1749	1766	1766	1766	298	298	298
Message Time/Date	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Profile	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Race/Ethnicity		X	X		X	X		X	X		X	X
Non-Profile Student Controls			X			X			X			X

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (1) using probit, in which the dependent variable is an indicator for whether a message received a response, and the independent variables are an indicator for whether the student who sent the message is female, the professional's field, message time/date characteristics, and student profile characteristics. Separate regressions are estimated for each question type: broad, specific - work/life balance, specific - competitive culture, and factual. Average marginal effects are reported. Columns 1, 4, 7, and 10 report results from the baseline specification. Columns 2, 5, 8, and 11 report results from a specification that additionally includes controls for student race/ethnicity. Columns 3, 6, 9, and 12 additionally include controls for student characteristics that may be observable elsewhere online. The omitted field is data science. Standard errors are clustered at the student level and are reported in parentheses.

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A10: Effect of Student Gender on Mentions of
Work/Life Balance and Workplace Culture
Accounting for Non-response

	Work/Life Balance Mention			Workplace Culture Mention		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Student Female	0.009***	0.008**	0.008**	0.001	-0.002	-0.002
	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.004)	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.003)
Finance	-0.001	-0.001	-0.001	-0.023***	-0.023***	-0.023***
	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.008)
Law	0.002	0.002	0.002	-0.028***	-0.028***	-0.028***
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.008)
Mgmt Consulting	0.025***	0.025***	0.025***	-0.014	-0.014	-0.014
	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)
Male Mean	0.007			0.013		
Observations	3530	3530	3530	3530	3530	3530
Message Time/Date	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Profile	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Race/Ethnicity		X	X		X	X
Non-Profile Student Controls			X			X

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (1), in which the dependent variable is an indicator for whether a response mentions work/life balance (columns 1–3) or workplace culture (columns 4–6), and the independent variables are an indicator for whether the student who sent the message is female, the professional's field, message time/date characteristics, and student profile characteristics. Messages that do not receive a response are coded as not mentioning these career attributes. Columns 1 and 3 report results from the baseline specification, which includes controls for student race/ethnicity. Columns 2 and 4 additionally include controls for student characteristics that may be observable elsewhere online. The omitted field is data science. Standard errors are clustered at the student level and are reported in parentheses.
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A11: Effect of Student Gender on Mentions of Work/Life Balance and Workplace Culture
Including Students with Ambiguously Gendered Names

	Work/Life Balance Mention			Workplace Culture Mention		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Student Female	0.074***	0.069**	0.068**	-0.005	-0.018	-0.021
	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.032)	(0.032)	(0.033)
Finance	0.015	0.014	0.010	-0.096*	-0.097*	-0.098**
	(0.026)	(0.026)	(0.026)	(0.049)	(0.049)	(0.049)
Law	0.076*	0.074*	0.070*	-0.128**	-0.128**	-0.131**
	(0.039)	(0.039)	(0.039)	(0.051)	(0.051)	(0.051)
Mgmt Consulting	0.201***	0.200***	0.202***	-0.038	-0.040	-0.041
	(0.045)	(0.045)	(0.046)	(0.056)	(0.056)	(0.056)
Male Mean	0.066			0.126		
Observations	420	420	420	420	420	420
Message Time/Date	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Profile	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Race/Ethnicity		X	X		X	X
Non-Profile Student Controls			X			X

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (1), in which the dependent variable is an indicator for whether a response mentions work/life balance (columns 1–3) or workplace culture (columns 4–6), and the independent variables are an indicator for whether the student who sent the message is female, the professional's field, message time/date characteristics, and student profile characteristics. The sample is expanded to include the 13 students with ambiguously gendered names. Columns 1 and 3 report results from the baseline specification, which includes controls for student race/ethnicity. Columns 2 and 4 additionally include controls for student characteristics that may be observable elsewhere online. The omitted field is data science. Standard errors are clustered at the student level and are reported in parentheses.
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A12: Effect of Student Gender on Mentions of Work/Life Balance and Workplace Culture
Including Students with Ambiguously Gendered Names: Additional Specifications

	Work/Life Balance Mention			Workplace Culture Mention		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Student Female	0.068**	0.061**	0.074***	-0.011	-0.018	-0.005
	(0.028)	(0.025)	(0.028)	(0.034)	(0.031)	(0.032)
Finance		0.017	0.015		-0.092*	-0.096*
		(0.024)	(0.026)		(0.049)	(0.049)
Law		0.083**	0.076*		-0.122**	-0.128**
		(0.041)	(0.039)		(0.052)	(0.051)
Mgmt Consulting		0.204***	0.201***		-0.033	-0.038
		(0.045)	(0.045)		(0.055)	(0.056)
Male Mean	0.066	0.066	0.066	0.126	0.126	0.126
Observations	420	420	420	420	420	420
Message Time/Date		X	X		X	X
Student Profile			X			X

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (1), in which the dependent variable is an indicator for whether a response mentions work/life balance (columns 1-3) or workplace culture (columns 4-6), and the independent variable is an indicator for whether the student who sent the message is female. Column 2 adds controls for the professional's field, message time/date characteristics. Column 3 adds controls for student profile characteristics and is the baseline specification in Appendix Table A11. The sample is expanded to include the 13 students with ambiguously gendered names. The omitted field is data science. Standard errors are clustered at the student level and are reported in parentheses.
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A13: Effect of Student Gender on Mentions of Work/Life Balance and Workplace Culture: Additional Specifications

	Work/Life Balance Mention			Workplace Culture Mention		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Student Female	0.073**	0.068**	0.087***	-0.006	-0.017	-0.003
	(0.031)	(0.028)	(0.032)	(0.036)	(0.033)	(0.034)
Finance		0.013	0.013		-0.125**	-0.127**
		(0.027)	(0.028)		(0.055)	(0.055)
Law		0.068	0.062		-0.165***	-0.172***
		(0.044)	(0.043)		(0.054)	(0.053)
Mgmt Consulting		0.204***	0.208***		-0.072	-0.074
		(0.050)	(0.051)		(0.060)	(0.060)
Male Mean	0.067			0.128		
Observations	363	363	363	363	363	363
Message Time/Date		X	X		X	X
Student Profile			X			X

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (1), in which the dependent variable is an indicator for whether a response mentions work/life balance (columns 1-3) or workplace culture (columns 4-6), and the independent variable is an indicator for whether the student who sent the message is female. Column 2 adds controls for the professional's field, message time/date characteristics. Column 3 adds controls for student profile characteristics and is the baseline specification in Table 4. The omitted field is data science. Standard errors are clustered at the student level and are reported in parentheses.
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A14: Effect of Student Gender on Mentions of Work/Life Balance and Workplace Culture
Restricting to Students with No Online Presence

	Work/Life Balance Mention		Workplace Culture Mention	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Student Female	0.132***	0.138***	0.034	0.061
	(0.026)	(0.030)	(0.049)	(0.047)
Finance	-0.023	-0.027	-0.134	-0.134
	(0.055)	(0.056)	(0.107)	(0.109)
Law	-0.030	-0.040	-0.266*	-0.263*
	(0.074)	(0.077)	(0.135)	(0.140)
Mgmt Consulting	0.056	0.054	-0.111	-0.115
	(0.087)	(0.087)	(0.118)	(0.121)
Male Mean	0.061		0.102	
Observations	110	110	110	110
Message Time/Date	X	X	X	X
Student Profile	X	X	X	X
Student Race/Ethnicity	X	X	X	X
Non-Profile Student Controls		X		X

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (1), in which the dependent variable is an indicator for whether a response mentions work/life balance (columns 1–2) or workplace culture (columns 3–4), and the independent variables are an indicator for whether the student who sent the message is female, the professional's field, message time/date characteristics, and student profile characteristics. The sample is restricted to messages sent by students who do not have an online presence. Columns 1 and 3 report results from the baseline specification, which includes controls for student race/ethnicity. Columns 2 and 4 additionally include controls for student characteristics that may be observable elsewhere online. The omitted field is data science. Standard errors are clustered at the student level and are reported in parentheses.
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A15: Effect of Student Gender on Mentions of Work/Life Balance and Workplace Culture: Logit Specification

	Work/Life Balance Mention			Workplace Culture Mention		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Student Female	0.095***	0.074**	0.069**	0.003	-0.026	-0.026
	(0.035)	(0.034)	(0.033)	(0.033)	(0.034)	(0.034)
Male Mean	0.067			0.128		
Observations	363	363	363	363	363	363
Message Time/Date	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Profile	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Race/Ethnicity		X	X		X	X
Non-Profile Student Controls			X			X

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (1) using logit, in which the dependent variable is an indicator for whether a response mentions work/life balance (columns 1-3) or workplace culture (columns 4-6), and the independent variables are an indicator for whether the student who sent the message is female, the professional's field, message time/date characteristics, and student profile characteristics. Average marginal effects are reported. Columns 1 and 4 report results from the baseline specification. Columns 2 and 5 report results from a specification that additionally includes controls for student race/ethnicity. Columns 3 and 6 additionally include controls for student characteristics that may be observable elsewhere online. The omitted field is data science. Standard errors are clustered at the student level and are reported in parentheses.
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A16: Effect of Student Gender on Mentions of Work/Life Balance and Workplace Culture: Probit Specification

	Work/Life Balance Mention			Workplace Culture Mention		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Student Female	0.096***	0.079**	0.079**	-0.001	-0.031	-0.030
	(0.032)	(0.032)	(0.031)	(0.032)	(0.033)	(0.033)
Male Mean	0.067			0.128		
Observations	363	363	363	363	363	363
Message Time/Date	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Profile	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Race/Ethnicity		X	X		X	X
Non-Profile Student Controls			X			X

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (1) using probit, in which the dependent variable is an indicator for whether a response mentions work/life balance (columns 1-3) or workplace culture (columns 4-6), and the independent variables are an indicator for whether the student who sent the message is female, the professional's field, message time/date characteristics, and student profile characteristics. Average marginal effects are reported. Columns 1 and 4 report results from the baseline specification. Columns 2 and 5 report results from a specification that additionally includes controls for student race/ethnicity. Columns 3 and 6 additionally include controls for student characteristics that may be observable elsewhere online. The omitted field is data science. Standard errors are clustered at the student level and are reported in parentheses.
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A17: Gender Differences in Composition of Professionals who Respond

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Female Student Mean	Male Student Mean	M-F Difference	p-value
Data Science	0.206	0.181	-0.024	0.562
Finance	0.271	0.282	0.011	0.821
Law	0.196	0.201	0.005	0.905
Mgmt Consulting	0.327	0.336	0.008	0.867
Female	0.248	0.255	0.007	0.874
College Graduation Year	2006.016	2007.037	1.021	0.417
College Selectivity - Admit Rate	0.274	0.269	-0.004	0.875
Alumni of Student's College	0.308	0.369	0.061	0.232
Any Graduate Degree	0.645	0.691	0.046	0.356
Any Ivy Degree	0.107	0.121	0.013	0.697
0-249 Connections	0.047	0.067	0.020	0.418
250-499 Connections	0.159	0.168	0.009	0.822
500+ Connections	0.757	0.732	-0.025	0.587
Observations	214	149	363	363

Note: This table reports the characteristics of professionals who respond to the broad questions, separately for male and female students.

Table A18: Heterogeneity by Professional Attributes

(1) Male	(2) Female	(3) Grad<2010	(4) Grad>=2010	(5) No Ivy	(6) Ivy	(7) Not Alum	(8) Alum	(9) Data Science	(10) Finance	(11) Law	(12) Mgmt Consulting
Panel A. Response Rate, Broad Question											
0.015	0.006	0.009	-0.002	0.010	0.012	0.015	0.008	0.025	0.014	0.009	0.009
(0.011)	(0.019)	(0.010)	(0.024)	(0.014)	(0.019)	(0.012)	(0.023)	(0.032)	(0.020)	(0.015)	(0.024)
[0.114]	[0.076]	[0.082]	[0.145]	[0.114]	[0.075]	[0.087]	[0.160]	[0.139]	[0.096]	[0.068]	[0.124]
Panel B. Response Rate, Specific Question - Work/Life Balance											
0.041*	0.045*	0.028	0.085**	0.051***	0.036	0.038**	0.072*	-0.027	0.069*	0.034	0.055*
(0.021)	(0.025)	(0.018)	(0.033)	(0.019)	(0.041)	(0.018)	(0.041)	(0.061)	(0.037)	(0.026)	(0.028)
[0.148]	[0.094]	[0.105]	[0.165]	[0.132]	[0.129]	[0.115]	[0.182]	[0.245]	[0.085]	[0.104]	[0.150]
Panel C. Response Rate, Specific Question - Competitive Culture											
0.019	-0.016	-0.012	0.011	0.003	-0.034	-0.016	0.022	0.008	0.046	0.008	-0.023
(0.023)	(0.031)	(0.022)	(0.039)	(0.019)	(0.057)	(0.024)	(0.038)	(0.061)	(0.031)	(0.032)	(0.040)
[0.154]	[0.108]	[0.125]	[0.170]	[0.145]	[0.155]	[0.125]	[0.223]	[0.242]	[0.109]	[0.115]	[0.146]
Panel D. Broad Question, Mention of Work/Life Balance											
0.064	0.140**	0.098**	0.043	0.053	0.338**	0.027	0.135***	0.037	0.084*	0.133*	0.064
(0.040)	(0.066)	(0.044)	(0.052)	(0.036)	(0.132)	(0.045)	(0.050)	(0.026)	(0.044)	(0.073)	(0.099)
[0.063]	[0.079]	[0.050]	[0.066]	[0.083]	[0.000]	[0.107]	[0.018]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.033]	[0.180]
Panel E. Broad Question, Mention of Workplace Culture											
-0.021	0.012	-0.028	0.090	-0.007	0.125	-0.044	0.065	-0.062	-0.093	-0.066	0.067
(0.046)	(0.089)	(0.052)	(0.061)	(0.040)	(0.189)	(0.053)	(0.056)	(0.136)	(0.064)	(0.062)	(0.087)
[0.126]	[0.132]	[0.100]	[0.092]	[0.116]	[0.056]	[0.155]	[0.036]	[0.185]	[0.119]	[0.100]	[0.120]

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (1), in which the dependent variable is listed in each panel title, and the independent variables are an indicator for whether the student who sent the message is female, the professional's field, message time/date characteristics, student profile characteristics, and student race/ethnicity. The column titles list the subsample used for estimation. Each entry in the table reports the estimated coefficient on student female from a separate specification. Standard errors are clustered at the student level and are reported in parentheses. Dependent variable means for male students are in brackets.
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A19: Effect of Student Gender on Mentions of Specific Work/Life Balance Issues

	Duration Typical Workweek		Work Schedule Flexibility		Extent of Travel/Work from Home	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Student Female	0.054*	0.057*	0.023	0.026	0.015	0.016
	(0.030)	(0.030)	(0.022)	(0.023)	(0.022)	(0.023)
Finance	0.026	0.022	0.021	0.018	0.001	0.001
	(0.025)	(0.024)	(0.013)	(0.015)	(0.018)	(0.018)
Law	0.062	0.057	0.043*	0.036*	-0.004	-0.004
	(0.040)	(0.038)	(0.022)	(0.021)	(0.017)	(0.017)
Mgmt Consulting	0.142***	0.143***	0.089***	0.089***	0.170***	0.171***
	(0.042)	(0.042)	(0.029)	(0.030)	(0.045)	(0.044)
Male Mean	0.047		0.027		0.034	
Observations	363	363	363	363	363	363
Message Time/Date	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Profile	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Race/Ethnicity	X	X	X	X	X	X
Non-Profile Student Controls		X		X		X

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (1), in which the dependent variable is an indicator for whether a response mentions a specific work/life balance issue, and the independent variables are an indicator for whether the student who sent the message is female, the professional's field, message time/date characteristics, and student profile characteristics. Columns 1, 3, and 5 report results from the preferred specification, which also controls for student/race ethnicity. Columns 2, 4, and 6 additionally include controls for student characteristics that may be observable elsewhere online. The omitted field is data science. Standard errors are clustered at the student level and are reported in parentheses.

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A20: Gender Differences in Response Tone (Student Ratings)

	Student more concerned about work/life balance		Student more concerned about workplace culture	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Broad	Work/Life Balance	Broad	Competitive Culture
Student Female	0.021	-0.049	-0.023	-0.013
	(0.026)	(0.053)	(0.014)	(0.033)
Finance	-0.020	0.310***	-0.088***	0.097*
	(0.024)	(0.053)	(0.024)	(0.058)
Law	0.048	0.368***	-0.077***	0.107**
	(0.034)	(0.061)	(0.025)	(0.053)
Mgmt Consulting	0.161***	0.496***	-0.056*	-0.040
	(0.042)	(0.042)	(0.029)	(0.051)
Male Mean	0.114	0.523	0.087	0.293
Observations	3717	2626	3717	2682
Message Time/Date	X	X	X	X
Student Profile	X	X	X	X
Student Race/Ethnicity	X	X	X	X

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (1), in which the dependent variable is an indicator for whether a response would make a typical college student more concerned about work/life balance or workplace culture, and the independent variables are an indicator for whether the student who sent the message is female, the professional's field, message time/date characteristics, student profile characteristics, and student race/ethnicity. The question type is listed in each column title. The omitted field is data science. Standard errors are clustered at the student level and are reported in parentheses.

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A21: Gender Differences in Response Length

	Broad		Work/Life Balance		Competitive Culture		Factual (Law Only)	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	Character Count	Log(Count)	Character Count	Log(Count)	Character Count	Log(Count)	Character Count	Log(Count)
Student Female	-8.747	-0.125	10.755	0.094	41.875	0.007	-115.259	-0.323
	(39.126)	(0.107)	(52.191)	(0.156)	(48.090)	(0.113)	(102.349)	(0.597)
Finance	-261.644***	-0.595***	-20.247	0.020	-55.515	-0.171		
	(74.237)	(0.180)	(54.440)	(0.153)	(66.544)	(0.152)		
Law	-210.993***	-0.381**	18.193	0.039	26.743	0.027		
	(78.255)	(0.176)	(57.283)	(0.154)	(70.103)	(0.164)		
Mgmt Consulting	-163.236**	-0.320*	134.036**	0.389***	14.302	0.092		
	(76.321)	(0.177)	(59.732)	(0.143)	(66.023)	(0.141)		
Male Mean	359.547	5.402	414.608	5.691	367.980	5.661	259.889	5.170
Observations	359	359	249	249	262	262	33	33
Message Time/Date	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Profile	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Race/Ethnicity	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (1), in which the dependent variable is the length of the response, and the independent variables are an indicator for whether the student who sent the message is female, the professional's field, message time/date characteristics, student profile characteristics, and student race/ethnicity. Columns 1, 3, 5, and 7 analyze the response's character count, while columns 2, 4, 6, and 8 analyze the natural logarithm of the character count. Responses to each question are analyzed separately. The omitted field is data science. Standard errors are clustered at the student level and are reported in parentheses.
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A22: Effect of Student Gender on Mentions of Competitive Culture

	Competitive Culture Mention		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Student Female	0.020	0.016	0.016
	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.016)
Finance	0.038**	0.039**	0.040**
	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.019)
Law	-0.005	-0.007	-0.009
	(0.006)	(0.008)	(0.008)
Mgmt Consulting	0.023	0.023*	0.019
	(0.014)	(0.013)	(0.012)
Male Mean	0.007	0.007	0.007
Observations	363	363	363
Message Time/Date	X	X	X
Student Profile	X	X	X
Student Race/Ethnicity		X	X
Non-Profile Student Controls			X

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (1), in which the dependent variable is an indicator for whether a response mentions competitive culture, and the independent variables are an indicator for whether the student who sent the message is female, the professional's field, message time/date characteristics, and student profile characteristics. Messages that do not receive a response are coded as not mentioning these career attributes. Column 1 reports results from the baseline specification. Column 2 includes controls for student race/ethnicity and 3 additionally include controls for student characteristics that may be observable elsewhere online. The omitted field is data science. Standard errors are clustered at the student level and are reported in parentheses.
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A23: Role of Professional Composition in Gender Differences in Response Rates

	Work/Life Balance Question		Competitive Culture Question		Factual Question (Law Only)	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Student Female	0.041***	0.042***	0.009	0.009	0.059	0.056
	(0.015)	(0.016)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.036)	(0.039)
Finance	-0.118***	-0.117***	-0.094***	-0.072**		
	(0.037)	(0.037)	(0.032)	(0.033)		
Law	-0.134***	-0.100**	-0.107***	-0.070*		
	(0.033)	(0.039)	(0.033)	(0.038)		
Mgmt Consulting	-0.071**	-0.078**	-0.087***	-0.075**		
	(0.032)	(0.034)	(0.031)	(0.032)		
Observations	1763	1763	1776	1776	298	298
Message Time/Date	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Profile	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Race/Ethnicity	X	X	X	X	X	X
Professional		X		X		X

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (1), in which the dependent variable is an indicator for whether a message received a response, and the independent variables are an indicator for whether the student who sent the message is female, the professional's field, message time/date characteristics, student profile characteristics, and student race/ethnicity. Separate regressions are estimated for each question type: broad, specific - work/life balance, specific - competitive culture, and factual. Columns 1, 3, and 5 report results from the preferred specification. Columns 2, 4, and 6 report results from a specification that additionally includes controls for professional characteristics. The omitted field is data science. Standard errors are clustered at the student level and are reported in parentheses.

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A24: Gender Differences in Responses to "Is work/life balance a concern?"

	Yes		It depends		No	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Student Female	0.002	-0.008	-0.023	-0.015	0.020	0.023
	(0.070)	(0.074)	(0.076)	(0.078)	(0.034)	(0.035)
Finance	0.217**	0.215**	-0.030	-0.034	-0.186***	-0.181***
	(0.088)	(0.087)	(0.108)	(0.107)	(0.069)	(0.068)
Law	0.315***	0.314***	-0.076	-0.063	-0.240***	-0.251***
	(0.091)	(0.093)	(0.111)	(0.115)	(0.065)	(0.067)
Mgmt Consulting	0.674***	0.672***	-0.427***	-0.422***	-0.247***	-0.250***
	(0.062)	(0.064)	(0.089)	(0.091)	(0.060)	(0.061)
Male Mean	0.427		0.512		0.061	
Observations	211	211	211	211	211	211
Message Time/Date	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Profile	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Race/Ethnicity	X	X	X	X	X	X
Non-Profile Student Controls		X		X		X

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (1), in which the dependent variable is an indicator for whether a response to the specific work/life balance question is one of the categories in the column titles, and the independent variables are an indicator for whether the student who sent the message is female, the professional's field, message time/date characteristics, and student profile characteristics. Columns 1, 3, and 5 report results from the preferred specification, which also controls for student/race ethnicity. Columns 2, 4, and 6 additionally include controls for student characteristics that may be observable elsewhere online. The omitted field is data science. Standard errors are clustered at the student level and are reported in parentheses.
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A25: Gender Differences in Responses to "Is cutthroat culture a concern?"

	Yes		It depends		No	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Student Female	0.025	0.024	0.007	0.010	-0.032	-0.033
	(0.049)	(0.050)	(0.066)	(0.066)	(0.070)	(0.068)
Finance	0.083	0.082	0.185	0.205*	-0.267***	-0.287***
	(0.079)	(0.081)	(0.112)	(0.115)	(0.097)	(0.100)
Law	0.135*	0.133*	0.092	0.098	-0.227**	-0.231**
	(0.079)	(0.078)	(0.111)	(0.109)	(0.088)	(0.088)
Mgmt Consulting	-0.030	-0.035	-0.053	-0.037	0.083	0.071
	(0.056)	(0.055)	(0.105)	(0.106)	(0.109)	(0.110)
Male Mean	0.134		0.512		0.354	
Observations	215	215	215	215	215	215
Message Time/Date	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Profile	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Race/Ethnicity	X	X	X	X	X	X
Non-Profile Student Controls		X		X		X

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (1), in which the dependent variable is an indicator for whether a response to the specific competitive culture question is one of the categories in the column titles, and the independent variables are an indicator for whether the student who sent the message is female, the professional's field, message time/date characteristics, and student profile characteristics. Columns 1, 3, and 5 report results from the preferred specification, which also controls for student/race ethnicity. Columns 2, 4, and 6 additionally include controls for student characteristics that may be observable elsewhere online. The omitted field is data science. Standard errors are clustered at the student level and are reported in parentheses.
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A26: Gender Differences in Hours Quoted in Response to Factual Question

	(1)	(2)
Student Female	81.61	70.74
	(73.97)	(68.69)
Male Mean	1937.50	
Observations	25	25
Message Time/Date	X	X
Student Profile	X	X
Student Race/Ethnicity		X

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (1), in which the dependent variable is the hours quoted in responses to the factual question, and the independent variables are an indicator for whether the student who sent the message is female, the professional's field, message time/date characteristics, and student profile characteristics. We only analyze only responses that include a numeric value or range. Column 1 reports results from the specification without controls for student/race ethnicity. Column 2 includes controls for student race/ethnicity. Standard errors are clustered at the student level and are reported in parentheses.
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A27: Determinants of Professionals' Time Allocation, Beliefs, and the Wedge: Female Professionals

	Emily			Ethan		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Minutes Allocated	Belief	Wedge	Minutes Allocated	Belief	Wedge
No Kids	0.10	-0.16	0.26*	-0.11	-0.15	0.04
	(0.14)	(0.12)	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.18)
Incorrect Priors	-0.17	-0.16	-0.01	0.53***	0.91***	-0.38**
	(0.16)	(0.15)	(0.16)	(0.17)	(0.17)	(0.18)
Social Objective	0.10	-0.09	0.19			
	(0.15)	(0.13)	(0.15)			
Control Mean	2.36	2.16	0.19	2.47	2.18	0.29
p-value for Emily/Ethan control mean diff	0.44	0.92	0.55			
Observations	705	705	705	537	537	537

Note: This table reports the results of a regression in which the dependent variable is either the professional's minutes allocated to discussing hours, the professional's belief about students' desired minutes allocated to discussing hours, or the difference between minutes allocated and the belief ("wedge"). For the Emily (Ethan) specifications, the independent variables are indicator variables for the three (two) treatment arms, with the control condition the omitted category. Robust standard errors are reported in parentheses.
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A28: Determinants of Professionals' Time Allocation, Beliefs, and the Wedge: Male Professionals

	Emily			Ethan		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Minutes Allocated	Belief	Wedge	Minutes Allocated	Belief	Wedge
No Kids	0.05	-0.15	0.21	-0.23*	0.01	-0.24
	(0.15)	(0.12)	(0.16)	(0.14)	(0.13)	(0.16)
Incorrect Priors	-0.08	-0.22	0.14	0.21	0.77***	-0.56***
	(0.16)	(0.15)	(0.16)	(0.15)	(0.16)	(0.15)
Social Objective	-0.06	-0.08	0.02			
	(0.16)	(0.15)	(0.16)			
Control Mean	2.29	2.03	0.26	2.26	1.91	0.35
p-value for Emily/Ethan control mean diff	0.79	0.30	0.55			
Observations	720	720	720	561	561	561

Note: This table reports the results of a regression in which the dependent variable is either the professional's minutes allocated to discussing hours, the professional's belief about students' desired minutes allocated to discussing hours, or the difference between minutes allocated and the belief ("wedge"). For the Emily (Ethan) specifications, the independent variables are indicator variables for the three (two) treatment arms, with the control condition the omitted category. Robust standard errors are reported in parentheses.
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A29: Effect of Information Received on Career Plans:
Is the Student Less Likely to Enter Preferred Career Path?
Received Any Information on Work/Life Balance

	Less Likely to Enter (binary)			Less Likely to Enter (continuous)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Received Info on Work/Life Balance	0.077*	0.075*	0.157**	0.665	0.723	1.006
	(0.042)	(0.043)	(0.066)	(0.496)	(0.495)	(0.622)
Received Info on Workplace Culture		0.014	-0.044		-0.797	-0.966
		(0.063)	(0.074)		(0.499)	(0.614)
Male Mean	0.000			3.710		
Observations	73	73	73	73	73	73
Industry Controls	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Controls	X	X	X	X	X	X
Message Controls		X	X		X	X
Professional Controls			X			X

Note: This table reports the results of the estimation of the regression specification outlined in Equation (3), in which the dependent variable is an indicator for whether a student is dissuaded from her preferred career path, relative to the start of the study, and the independent variables are whether the student received any information on work/life balance in her preferred career path, characteristics listed on the student's profile, and the student's preferred career path. Column 2 includes whether the student received any information on workplace culture in her preferred career path and response length. Column 3 includes all previously listed controls as well as the characteristics of the professionals. Robust standard errors are reported in parentheses.
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$