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Gendered Honors: Graduation Committees, Academic Distinction, and Early-Career Outcomes*

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Abstract

We study how committee dynamics affect the recognition of academic excellence and its consequences in the labour market. Using administrative records from a major Italian university and exploiting exogenous variation in the gender composition of graduation committees, we show that equally prepared female graduates are significantly less likely to receive laude honors when evaluated by male-majority committees, while males are unaffected. The effect is concentrated among students advised by female or early-career faculty and disappears when a woman chairs the committee, pointing to the role of authority and influence in deliberations. We show pre-defense gender gaps in adivsors' official laude requests in male-majority committees, consistent with nominations responding to expected committee support. Gaps in academic distinction translate into meaningful entry-wage penalties, contributing to gender gaps at labor-market entry.

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1 Introduction

Signals of individual productivity acquired through education substantially impact labor-market trajectories, especially early in the career (Hansen et al., 2024; Landaud et al., 2026; Tan, 2023). Academic honors are one such signal and are commonly awarded by faculty committees, whose deliberations may be shaped by differences in group influence, potentially to the disadvantage of underrepresented groups. Recent studies show that women's influence drops in male-majority groups, leading their opinions to be systematically disregarded (Karpowitz et al., 2024; Radbruch and Schiprowski, 2026). Despite recent progress in gender balance, a large number of academic institutions, such as economics and STEM departments (Lundberg and Stearns, 2019), remain male-dominated, potentially affecting committees' deliberations and students' graduation outcomes in turn. However, little is known on how group dynamics can impact the recognition of academic excellence by examination committees.

We study whether the gender composition of graduation committees impacts the gender gap in students' graduation outcomes. We focus on *laude* honors – i.e., academic distinction awarded on top of the highest achievable grades – and link this early signal to entry-level labor market outcomes. Graduation committees are faculty panels evaluating students' thesis defense and approving their final grades. We compare the graduation outcomes of female relative to male students who are assigned to male-majority graduation committees rather than gender-equal or female-majority panels.

We employ rich administrative data from a major Italian university, which include detailed records on students' characteristics and their academic performance. Specifically, we collect information on more than 7,000 students who obtained their Master of Science (MSc, or *Laurea Magistrale*) in either business or economics over the 2012-2022 period. We complement these data with detailed information on graduation committees, including each member's role, seniority, age, gender, and main research field. Finally, we link students to follow-up employment surveys conducted by the same university one, three, and five years after graduation.

Our empirical analysis exploits the institutional setting of the Italian university system. After completing coursework and exams, MSc students defend their thesis in front of a graduation committee. Each committee evaluates approximately nine candidates in a single session and is primarily composed of the students' thesis advisors. The student's grade point average serves as the baseline for the final graduation mark, with 110 being the highest grade. The thesis defense carries significant weight, as the committee can

award up to eight points. Students achieving 110 are eligible for the laude distinction, which requires both an *ex-ante* official request by the advisor and unanimous approval by the committee.

We leverage conditionally random variation in the gender composition of graduation committees. Committees are formed based on faculty members' availability over a one week window of potential dates. The only student's choice affecting committee composition is the gender of the thesis advisor. Students graduating in the same program and year face the same pool of available faculty. As a result, conditional on advisor's gender and on the program-year of graduation, the gender composition of the assigned committee is as good as random. Consistently, we show that, controlling for these variables, the probability of being assigned to a male-majority committee is uncorrelated with student's predetermined characteristics, including academic ability. Nonetheless, our identification relies on the substantially weaker assumption that any difference in the unobserved ability of students assigned to male-majority versus non-male-majority committees does not vary across genders.

We find that equally-prepared female students are less likely to be awarded laude when evaluated by male-majority committees, while no difference is detected for male students. When male commissioners constitute the majority, female graduates experience a 4 percentage points decrease in the probability of receiving laude, which corresponds to approximately a 15% reduction relative to the control mean. As expected, gender gaps are concentrated among students with exam scores at the margin for laude eligibility. We find no similar gaps in other graduation outcomes, such as the final grade, the probability of being awarded full points for the thesis defense, or the probability of passing lower grade thresholds. Instead, our results pertain to academic distinction and to an outcome that requires unanimous approval by the committee.[1]

To shed light on the mechanisms underlying our main results, we first examine heterogeneity by advisor and committee characteristics. The penalty in male-majority committees is concentrated among students advised by female and early-career faculty. Moreover, the gender gap disappears when a female professor chairs a male-majority committee. These patterns suggest that the effect is not simply driven by the committee's gender composition *per se*, but by how gender composition interacts with authority and influence within the committee. We show evidence inconsistent with alternative explanations, such as commissioners' gender bias or lower research similarity between

[1]Our main result aligns with Bol (2023), who provides observational evidence of gender disparities in PhD laude distinctions in the Netherlands.

female students and male commissioners.

We then use a subsample of committees for which pre-defense laude requests are available. Graduation guidelines require advisors who consider a thesis worthy of laude to notify all committee members by email. Crucially for our analysis, these requests are made after advisors observe the committee composition but before the defense takes place. We collected such requests for 155 committees evaluating 1,080 students, approximately 18% of all committees.[2] In this subset of committees, the estimated gap is similar in magnitude at the request and award stages. This pattern is consistent with committee composition shaping advisors' willingness to put female candidates forward for distinction.

Taken together, our results point to deliberative dynamics rather than differences in student performance. Consistent with Karpowitz et al. (2024) and Radbruch and Schiprowski (2026), gender composition may shape advisors' influence within committees. The absence of gender gaps in committees chaired by women suggests that hierarchical authority can offset the underrepresentation penalty in influence. Because we observe gender gaps since the request stage, when interactions have yet to take place, we rationalise our results through a simple second-order-beliefs framework, whereby advisors of female students expect lower colleagues' support in male-dominated committees and reduce their laude requests accordingly.

Finally, we turn to the labor market outcomes of students in our sample. Overall, about 50% of students in our administrative data are also present in this follow-up survey. We first show that being assigned to a male-majority committee has no differential effect for female compared to male students on the probability of responding to the survey, thus ruling out selective attrition. Employment probabilities are uniformly high in our context, and committee gender composition does not significantly affect the likelihood of securing a job. However, the results for earnings reveal more concerning patterns: one year after graduation, female graduates assigned to male-majority committees are 6.4 percentage points less likely to be in the top 25% of the salary distribution in their first year, corresponding to a monthly wage penalty of 64 euros. These early-career earnings gap narrows over time, in line with evidence from Hansen et al. (2024) and Khoo and Ost (2018). However, the probability of working in the public sector responds negatively five years after graduation, consistent with laude being valued in competitions for public-sector jobs.

[2]While graduation guidelines instruct advisors to notify committee members when proposing a candidate for laude, these requests are submitted by email and are not part of any administrative record.

Our paper contributes to the growing literature on group gender composition and decision-making. While women generally exhibit lower self-confidence and willingness to lead (Alan et al., 2019; Hakimov et al., 2025), these gaps are exacerbated in male-dominated environments (Born et al., 2022; Karpowitz et al., 2024; Radbruch and Schiprowski, 2026). Consistently, minority gender quotas for corporate boards have limited spillovers on early-career women (Bertrand et al., 2018; Maida and Weber, 2022), while individual female managers or larger female peer groups help women's careers (Kunze and Miller, 2017; Hampole et al., 2024). While we don't directly measure members' influence, we complement this literature by showing that committee dynamics impact the recognition of academic excellence in a real-world, high-stakes setting. We interpret our results as operating at least in part through second-order beliefs, consistent with Dustan et al. (2022) and, more broadly, work showing that stereotypes and biased beliefs shape evaluations and behavior (Bordalo et al., 2019; Coffman et al., 2021).

Second, we contribute to the literature on early-career signals and labor market trajectories. Previous research shows that early evaluations can have sizeable effects on labor market outcomes (Atay et al., 2024; Gong and Pan, 2023; Hansen et al., 2024; Khoo and Ost, 2018; Feng and Graetz, 2017; Landaud et al., 2026).[3] Beyond their signaling value, better grades may serve as "self-signaling" on a student's own ability, impacting aspirations and choices (Tan, 2023). We extend this literature by showing that these signals can be biased when produced in male-dominated environments, contributing to early-career gender wage gaps (Bovini et al., 2024).

Finally, we add to the large literature on gender bias in academic evaluations and career advancement (Bagues et al., 2017; Baltrunaite et al., 2025; Card et al., 2020; Dupas et al., 2026; Mengel et al., 2019).[4] While prior work has focused primarily on academic promotions, evaluations and publishing outcomes, we provide causal evidence on the extent to which the gender composition of evaluators at key stages of education, i.e., graduation, affects the recognition of academic excellence.

[3]Other studies find that holding a diploma does not affect labour market outcomes conditional on ability (Clark and Martorell, 2014; Jepsen et al., 2016).

[4]De Paola and Scoppa (2015) show that Italian female faculty are less likely to be promoted when evaluated by all-male committees. In a similar setting, Bagues et al. (2017) show that increasing female representation in academic promotion committees does not improve women's outcomes. Women receive systematically lower teaching evaluations (Mengel et al., 2019), their papers face a higher publication bar (Card et al., 2020), and they receive lower recognition for group work (Sarsons, 2017). Dupas et al. (2026) show that women presenting economics research are interrupted more often than men, while Baltrunaite et al. (2025) document gendered language in recommendation letters for graduate students in economics, with men more often described as brilliant and women as hardworking or diligent.

2 Institutional setting and data description

Our data come from a major private Italian university. This university is a large, multi-field Italian institution embedded in the same national higher-education system as public universities and subject to the same national rules governing academic qualifications, degree programs, and faculty recruitment. The university offers a broad range of both undergraduate and graduate degree programs across disciplines, including business and economics.

2.1 Institutional setting

The Italian university system requires *Laurea Specialistica* (MSc) students, after completing all exams and coursework, to prepare an original thesis under the supervision of a faculty advisor of their choice and defend it in front of a graduation committee. While students are free to choose their thesis advisor, neither students nor advisors observe the future committee composition at the time of advisor selection, which is determined later based on the availability of other students' advisors and faculty members. Committees typically evaluate a group of candidates in a single half-day session scheduled within the designated graduation period.[5] Committees consist of at least five faculty members, primarily students' thesis advisors. Their composition is determined by advisors' availability: faculty members are requested to indicate at least four possible time slots (morning or afternoon) within a one week window. Based on these responses, committees are formed by the administration without direct coordination among members. The legally required minimum size is five committee members. A full professor is typically appointed as president of the committee, responsible for ensuring compliance with regulations and announcing the final grade. Importantly, the process that creates the committees is unrelated to the academic ability of the students being evaluated.

The student's grade point average (*pre-defense* GPA) serves as the baseline for the final graduation mark, with 110 being the highest grade.[6] The thesis defense typically lasts 15 minutes, of which approximately 10 minutes are devoted to the student's presentation of the thesis, with the remaining time allocated to questions from the committee and clarifications. The defense carries significant weight in the final mark, since the com-

[5] Each academic year has five graduation periods: September/October, December, February, March/April, and July.

[6] The pre-defense GPA is a weighted average of grades from previous exams, where the weights are the credits assigned to each course.

mittee may award up to eight additional points. The final grade is determined through a discussion among committee members, all of whom may ask questions during the defence and participate with equal weight in the deliberation. For suitable students, the thesis advisor must request consideration for laude by sending an email to all members of the graduation committee before the defense. Laude honors are therefore awarded only to students whose supervisor advances such a request, reach the maximum final grade, and obtain unanimous approval from the committee. These procedures are standard within the Italian university system and closely resemble graduation practices at other Italian public and private universities.

2.2 Data description

Graduation committees. We obtained data on the composition of all graduation committees in the Faculty of Economics over the academic years 2011/12 to 2021/22, amounting to a total of 840 committees.[7] These data contain the day and time of the graduation session, the names of all committee members and those of the students evaluated. We complemented this dataset with records from the university's *Annuario*, an official yearbook that provides detailed information on all teaching and faculty staff at the institution. From this source, we obtained variables describing each member's academic rank (full professor, associate professor, assistant professor, or postdoctoral researcher) as well as their date and place of birth and the year of appointment to their position. In addition, for faculty members, we were able to retrieve information on their main research specialization, identified through the *Settore Scientifico Disciplinare* (SSD) associated with their academic position. The SSD is the official field classification used in the Italian university system to assign faculty members to disciplinary areas. Graduation committees often include adjunct professors, i.e. external instructors who teach one or more courses at the university on a contract basis. For these members, we are only able to retrieve their gender. Table 1 shows that about 71% of the committees are male-majority. On average, committees are composed of six members and evaluate about nine students, 52% of whom are female. As indicated by the standard deviations reported in parentheses, there is considerable variation in the age of committee members

[7]The programs offered include the following degree courses (corsi di laurea): Data analytics for business, Direzione e consulenza aziendale (Business administration and consulting), Economia (Economics), Economia e gestione dei beni culturali e dello spettacolo (Economics and management of cultural heritage and performing arts), Economia e legislazione d'impresa (Economics and business law), Innovation and technology management, Management per l'impresa (Management for business), and Mercati e strategie d'impresa (Markets and business strategy).

as well as in their status within the university, i.e. whether they are internal (non-adjunct professors) or tenured. The table reports averages for all committees, as well as separately for male-majority and non–male-majority committees; there appear to be no significant or sizeable differences between these two groups in terms of members' characteristics.

Students' characteristics and outcomes. We link committee data to administrative records on students' academic careers. The dataset is particularly rich, with detailed records on students' sociodemographic characteristics, including date and place of birth, gender, and family income. Regarding pre-MSc educational outcomes, the data include students' educational background, such as high school type and final grade, as well as the institution, field of study, and final grade of their bachelor's degree. In addition, it records students' academic performance during the MSc, including all courses with their examination results, as well as the overall pre-defense GPA and the final graduation grade. In total, the dataset includes information on more than 7,300 MSc graduates in business and economics over the period considered.

Table 1 shows that the average graduation age is 25, and the average pre-defense GPA is roughly 100, with 45% of students eligible for laude (i.e., pre-defense GPA $\geq$ 102). Committees generally evaluate students from different programs.The concentration of students from the same MSc program within individual committees is measured using a Herfindahl index. The average value is approximately 0.53, suggesting a moderate degree of program concentration within committees, especially when interpreted against the uneven overall distribution of students across MSc programs.[8] Male-majority committees evaluate students who are less likely to be female (51%, against 56% for equal or female-majority committees) and students with a lower starting GPA (99.5 against 100.3). These differences are likely due to the different supply of female faculty across degree courses, and the sorting of different students into these courses. For this reason, in our empirical analysis, we will not directly compare committees with different gender compositions, but the relative examination outcomes of male and female students in male-majority committees against equal or female-majority committees.

[8]The distribution of students across MSc programs is not uniform: about 75 percent of students graduate from three programs, with Management students accounting for 40 percent.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics

	All	Male Majority	Equal or Female Maj.
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Male majority	0.707	1.000	0.000
	(0.455)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Committee members (#)	6.420	6.537	6.138
	(1.411)	(1.441)	(1.296)
Female members (%)	0.347	0.248	0.588
	(0.197)	(0.129)	(0.105)
Members' age	48.812	48.869	48.676
	(5.727)	(5.872)	(5.372)
Internal members(%)	0.635	0.625	0.657
	(0.200)	(0.205)	(0.187)
Tenured members (%)	0.487	0.492	0.476
	(0.206)	(0.211)	(0.196)
Students (#)	8.786	8.776	8.809
	(1.985)	(2.013)	(1.921)
Female students (%)	0.522	0.507	0.559
	(0.208)	(0.209)	(0.202)
Students' Age	25.079	25.120	24.982
	(0.875)	(0.911)	(0.773)
Students' GPA (pre-defense)	99.739	99.501	100.316
	(3.233)	(3.220)	(3.197)
Students eligible for Laude	0.454	0.439	0.493
	(0.238)	(0.232)	(0.248)
HHI of MSc programs	0.533	0.518	0.572
	(0.214)	(0.205)	(0.232)
Observations	840	594	246

Notes: The table reports averages at the committee level. Standard deviations are reported in parenthesis.

Students have some degree of choice about their thesis advisor, potentially affecting the gender composition of their graduation committee. When approaching the thesis stage, final-year students can contact faculty members to match with a supervisor based on their research interests, and their requests are met subject to availability. As we could expect, female students are more likely to match with a female advisor, but the gap is moderate as 33% of female students have a female advisor against 27% for males. The relatively low shares reflect the scarce supply of female faculty. Figure 1 shows that

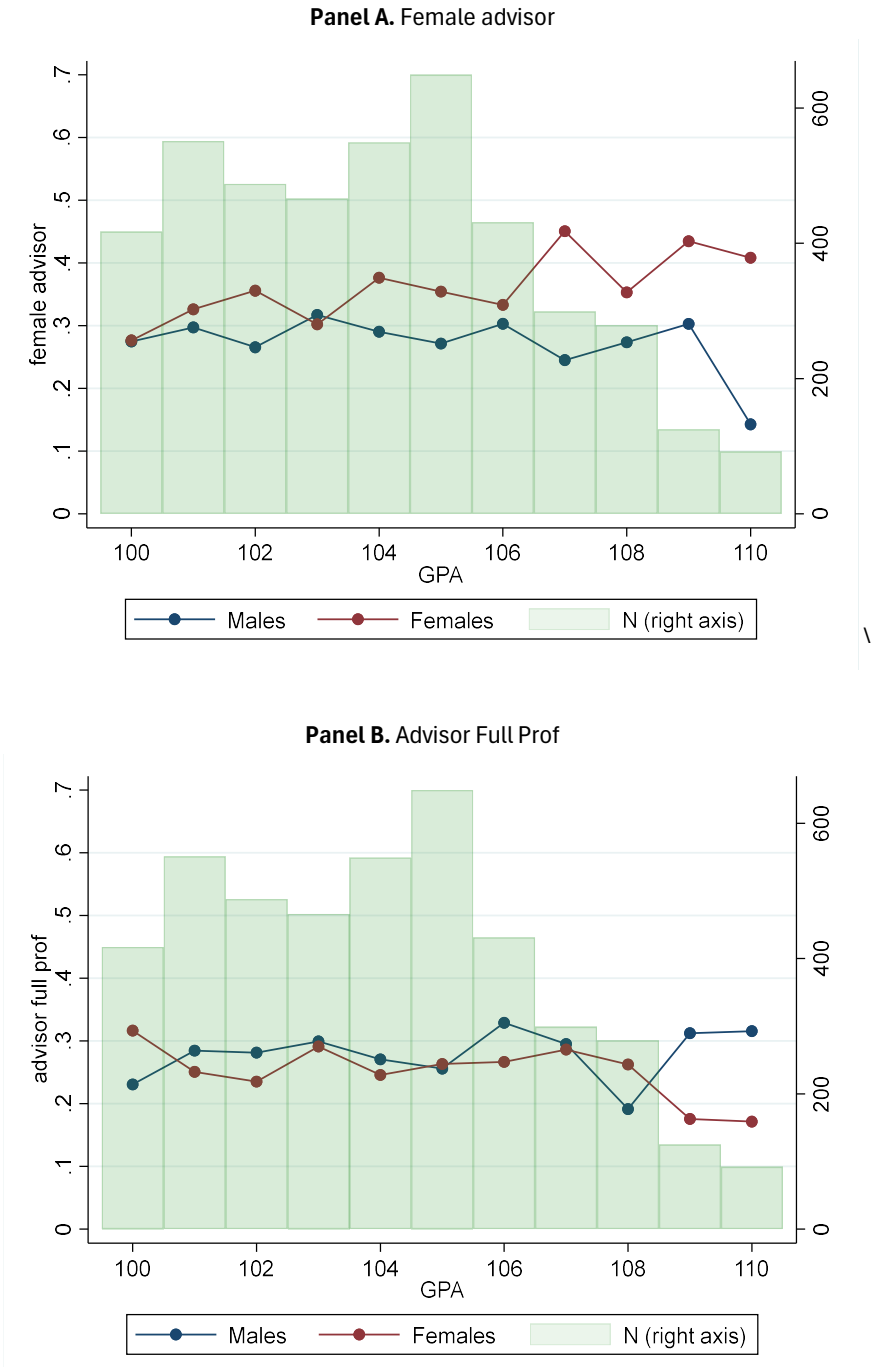
the gender gap in the choice of a female advisor is even narrower among students whose likelihood of being awarded laude is uncertain based on their starting GPA (100-106, Panel A), while it widens at the top of the ability distribution (107-110). For students at risk of laude, we also don't observe substantial gender gaps in the choice of a full professor as thesis advisor (Panel B). Overall, our data suggest that gender gaps in the choice of advisor do not substantially alter the relative gender composition of graduation committees between male and female students. Nevertheless, in our empirical analysis, we will always compare students conditional on the advisor's gender.

Laude requests. The information on laude requests is not recorded in administrative data. As explained in Section 2.1, university guidelines require advisors to email committee members when they believe that a student's thesis is worthy of laude; hence, this information is recorded only in personal emails. We therefore contacted committee chairs and asked them to share the requests they had received over the period under analysis. Overall, we managed to recover around 180 laude requests across 155 committees, corresponding to roughly 18 percent of our sample

Labor market survey. The university conducts a longitudinal survey that tracks the professional outcomes of its graduates one, three, and five years after graduation. This survey gathers key data regarding employment status, employer characteristics, salary levels, and job satisfaction. It serves as an important tool to assess the effectiveness of academic programs and the integration of graduates into the labor market.

Although the survey is aimed at all Master's degree graduates, participation is voluntary, resulting in a self-selected sample. The questionnaire is distributed via email and completed online using the CAWI method. To increase response rates, the system sends automated reminders, and those who still haven't responded are contacted by phone for additional follow-up. This multi-step outreach aims to maximize participation and ensures more reliable and representative data.

Figure 1: Gender gaps in the choice of thesis advisor



Notes: The figure displays the share of students whose advisor is female (Panel A) or full professor (Panel B) as function of starting GPA, separately for female (red lines) and male students (blue lines). Light green bars display the total number of students in each starting GPA group, measured in the right axis. The sample includes students with a starting GPA of at least 100.

3 Empirical strategy

The main purpose of this paper is to investigate the impact of the gender composition of the graduation committees on students' graduation and labor market outcomes. We thus estimate a simple linear model:

$$y_i = \alpha + \beta F_i + \gamma M_{c(i)} + \delta F_i \times M_{c(i)} + X_i'\theta + \epsilon_i, \tag{1}$$

where y is the generic outcome of student i; F is a female dummy and M is an indicator for male-majority committees, with $c(i)$ indexing the committee c to which student i is assigned. The coefficient δ thus captures the differential effect of male-majority committees for female versus male students. Our baseline specification includes pre-defense GPA fixed effects, interacted with a female indicator, so that we compare students with the same starting GPA while allowing the relationship between GPA and outcomes to differ by gender. In additional specifications, we progressively add MSc-program-by-year controls and advisor fixed effects, including their interaction with the female indicator, to account for differences across programs and cohorts and for the potential selection of students into advisors. Since the treatment varies across committees, we cluster standard errors at the committee level.

Our identification strategy exploits exogenous variation in the gender composition of graduation committees. Conditional on the supply of faculty, and the advisor's gender, the committee formation process is out of the student's control (see Section 2), making it as good as randomly assigned. We test this claim through a set of regressions where the dependent variable is M, the indicator for male-majority committees, and the independent variables are students' pre-defense characteristics. Nonetheless, the identifying assumption for our coefficient of interest – δ in equation (1) – is substantially weaker. Our results rely on the assumption that any unobserved ability difference between students assigned to male-majority versus non-male-majority committees does not vary across genders. We test this weaker assumption in our exogeneity checks by interacting pre-defense characteristics with the female indicator.

Table 2 reports estimates from our exogeneity checks. In columns (1)-(2), we show that being assigned to a male-majority committee is uncorrelated with students' pre-defense characteristics, conditional on advisor's gender and the program-year of graduation. Coefficients on student's demographics such as family income (column 1) or on variables summarising student's academic history (added in column 2) are consistently

small in magnitude and statistically not significant. In columns (3)-(4), we show that this conclusion holds for both students' genders, supporting the validity of our coefficient of interest. The coefficients of variables that proxy for academic ability are small in magnitude and statistically insignificant, both in levels and when interacted with the female indicator. The only exception is age, which is statistically significant at the 10 percent level but varies very little within the student population.[9] Remarkably, pre-defense GPA and being awarded laude in the BA degree do not affect the probability of being assigned to male-majority or non-male majority committees. We conclude that our results, presented in the next section, can be interpreted as causal effects.

[9]Excluding age, the balancing test remains unchanged: all other coefficients, including the interacted terms, are small in magnitude and statistically insignificant.

Table 2: Exogeneity of assignment of students to male majority committees

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Age	0.000	0.000	0.004	0.006
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
Female	-0.014	-0.019*	0.236	0.504
	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.171)	(0.342)
Low income	0.018	0.016	0.017	0.017
	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.019)	(0.019)
North	-0.001	0.002	-0.007	-0.003
	(0.011)	(0.012)	(0.016)	(0.017)
Science HS track		-0.008		0.004
		(0.014)		(0.020)
Humanities HS track		-0.001		-0.006
		(0.016)		(0.025)
HS grade		0.001		0.000
		(0.001)		(0.001)
BA Laude		0.018		0.024
		(0.016)		(0.024)
BA grade		0.001		0.003*
		(0.001)		(0.001)
MSc GPA		-0.002*		-0.003*
		(0.001)		(0.002)
Female × Age			-0.010	-0.013*
			(0.007)	(0.007)
Female × Low income			0.003	-0.001
			(0.025)	(0.026)
Female × North			0.010	0.009
			(0.022)	(0.023)
Female × Science HS track				-0.023
				(0.028)
Female × Humanities HS track				0.003
				(0.032)
Female × HS grade				0.000
				(0.001)
Female × BA laude				-0.006
				(0.030)
Female × BA grade				-0.003
				(0.002)
Female × MSc GPA				0.001
				(0.002)
Observations	7,229	7,212	7,229	7,212
R-squared	0.157	0.158	0.157	0.159
Year × MSc FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Female advisor	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Number of Clusters	840	840	840	840

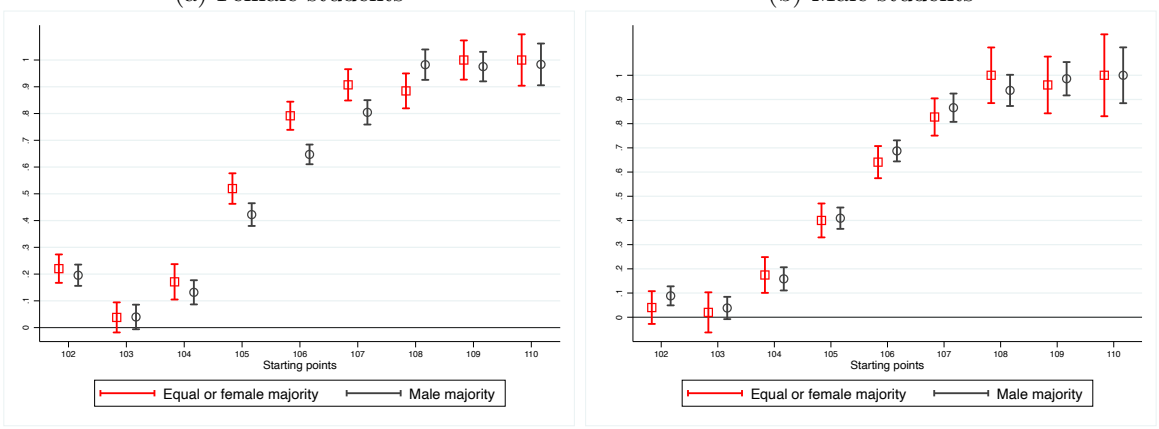
Notes: The table reports coefficients from OLS regressions of the graduation committee's gender makeup on students' baseline characteristics. The dependent variable is a dummy indicating male-majority committees. All regressions further control for year-by-MSc-course dummies and a female advisor indicator. Standard errors are clustered at the committee level and reported in parentheses.

4 Results

4.1 Graduation outcomes

We start our empirical investigation with Figure 2, which shows that the probability of being awarded laude differs depending on the gender composition of the graduation committee for female students, but not for their male peers. As one would expect, the probability of graduating with laude honors is highly correlated with the starting GPA, being very low for students with a GPA below 104 and approaching one for students with a GPA above 108. While being assigned to a male-majority committee does not affect the outcome of male candidates (Panel b), it generates stark differences for female students who are at the margin of receiving the laude (Panel a). In particular, for female candidates starting between 105 and 107, we observe a gap of about 10 percentage points in the probability of being awarded laude when they are evaluated by a male-majority committee. For example, consider students starting from 106. The probability of receiving laude in male-majority committees is about 65% for female students; the same probability increases to 80% for female students in equal or female majority committees.

Figure 2: Committees, laude honors, and starting GPA by gender



Notes: The figure displays the average probability of receiving laude honors for female (a) and male (b) students, by starting GPA and distinguishing between male-majority and non-majority committees. The sample consists of 7,393 students.

We then estimate equation (1) and find differences consistent with those illustrated in Figure 2. Estimated coefficients are reported in Panel A of Table 3. Column (1) includes only fixed effects for the pre-defense GPA interacted with the female dummy and the year of graduation. The constant indicates that the probability of receiving

laude in non–male-majority committees for male students is 27%. Male candidates evaluated by male-majority committees do not experience a significant change in the probability of receiving laude. Instead, female candidates are less likely to be awarded laude when evaluated by male-majority committees. The estimated effect corresponds to a decrease of approximately 3.6 percentage points, or about a 14% reduction relative to the baseline. In Column (2), we include interactions between GPA, graduation year, and MSc program, thus comparing students enrolled in the same program who graduate in the same year and have the same initial GPA. The estimated effects are slightly larger in absolute value but convey the same conclusion. The inclusion of student characteristics, such as income, age, prior educational outcomes, and macro-region of birth, all interacted with the female dummy, does not affect the estimated coefficients (Column 3).

One potential concern is that our estimates may be driven by endogenous advisor choice. Female students are more likely to choose female advisors, reducing the likelihood of being evaluated by a male-majority committee. We have shown that these gender gaps in the gender composition of the graduation committee are limited in size, especially for GPA levels at the margin of laude award (see Section 2). Nevertheless, to address this concern, we augment our specification by including advisor fixed effects, as well as their interaction with the female dummy. This approach implies that identification comes from variation in committee composition across students supervised by the same advisor, where differences in committee gender composition arise solely from the gender of the advisors of the other students evaluated by the same committee. As shown in the table, the estimated coefficients are virtually unchanged by the inclusion of these controls, suggesting that our results are not driven by advisor selection (Column 4).

In the final specification, reported in Column (5), we include committee fixed effects, thus exploiting within-committee variation in students' gender. This specification controls for any committee characteristic, thus comparing male and female students evaluated by the same committee. The estimated coefficient of interest is only slightly affected, reinforcing the interpretation that our results are not driven by systematic differences across committees.[10]

Overall, this set of regression results is highly robust to the inclusion of different sets of controls, providing reassurance about the validity of our identification strategy and the exogeneity of the treatment assignment. We show in Appendix Table A.1 that the results are similar when we restrict the sample to students who are at eligible to

[10]The inclusion of committee fixed effects absorb the male-majority dummy due to perfect collinearity.

receive laude honors, i.e., those with a pre-defense GPA of at least 102. Similarly, we obtain consistent results when replacing the male-majority dummy with the share of female committee members (Appendix Table A.2), or when male majority is computed excluding student's advisor (Appendix Table A.3).

Table 3: Male majority committees and graduation outcomes

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Panel A: Laude award					
Male Majority	0.0061	0.0037	0.0036	0.0125	
	(0.0095)	(0.0107)	(0.0109)	(0.0115)	
Male Majority × Female	-0.0364***	-0.0445***	-0.0439***	-0.0443***	-0.0423**
	(0.0134)	(0.0156)	(0.0161)	(0.0167)	(0.0184)
Constant	0.2690***	0.2774***	0.2814***	0.2765***	0.2846***
	(0.0060)	(0.0062)	(0.0064)	(0.0069)	(0.0067)
Observations	7,373	7,023	6,865	6,730	6,715
Panel B: Points (%)					
Male Majority	-0.0057	-0.0101*	-0.0089	-0.0054	
	(0.0061)	(0.0060)	(0.0060)	(0.0061)	
Male Majority × Female	0.0030	-0.0008	-0.0002	0.0028	-0.0014
	(0.0068)	(0.0070)	(0.0071)	(0.0076)	(0.0078)
Constant	0.8037***	0.8134***	0.8148***	0.8116***	0.8092***
	(0.0040)	(0.0034)	(0.0034)	(0.0033)	(0.0028)
Observations	7,373	7,023	6,865	6,730	6,715
Controls:					
Graduation Year	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
GPA × Female	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
GPA × MSc × Year	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Students' char. × Female	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Advisor × Female	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Committee FE	No	No	No	No	Yes

Notes: The table reports OLS regressions of Equation (1). All regressions include graduation year fixed effects, and standard errors are clustered at the committee level. In Panel (A), the dependent variable is the probability of receiving the laude honors, while in Panel (B) the outcome is the share of available points obtained in the thesis defense.

The award of laude is the only graduation outcome for which differential gender gaps are observed depending on the gender composition of the committee. We find no comparable gaps in the final grade or in the number of points awarded to the thesis,

which we measure as the share of the available points (Panel B of Table 3). The outcome variable is mechanically bounded: students with higher starting GPAs require fewer additional points to reach the maximum final grade. Accordingly, the denominator is adjusted to reflect the maximum number of points each student can still receive. Across all specifications, we find no sizeable or statistically significant effects for these alternative outcomes. Our results, therefore, specifically concern academic excellence and involve an honor that must be unanimously agreed upon by the committee. In Appendix Tables A.4 and A.5, we additionally show that other margins, such as *pieni voti* (a graduation mark of at least 99) and other thresholds commonly required for public competitions (a graduation mark of at least 105), are not affected. Taken together, these results indicate that the gender gap emerges only at the margin of formal excellence recognition, i.e. *laude honors*.

4.2 Exploring mechanisms

There are several potential explanations for the differential gender gaps in laude honors based on the gender composition of the graduation committee. We investigate potential mechanisms in this subsection. We first examine two alternative explanations: variation in gender norms among committee members and sorting into research fields. We then analyze heterogeneity by advisor status and committee leadership, which relates more directly to the role of within-group dynamics.

Gender norms. First, male-majority committees may discriminate against female candidates as a result of gender stereotypes, such as the belief that women are less capable in quantitative and STEM related fields (Alan et al., 2018; Carlana, 2019). Following Meluzzi (2024), we proxy gender norms at the individual committee-member level using the ratio of female to male labor force participation (LFP) in each committee member's municipality of birth, as measured in the 2011 Italian Population Census.[11] We divide the sample into committees with low and high female-to-male labor force participation (LFP) ratios and estimate the same specification as in Table 3, Column (4). The negative effect of male-majority committees on female students' probability of receiving laude is not larger in committees characterized by more traditional gender norms, as shown in Columns (1) and (2) of Table 4.

[11] As documented by (Meluzzi, 2024), this proxy is strongly correlated with regional variation in attitudes toward gender roles.

Sorting into research fields. A second potential explanation relates to the sorting of female students into gendered research fields. Female students may be more likely to specialize in research areas that differ from those more commonly pursued by males (Bello et al., 2023). When theses in these areas are evaluated by male-dominated committees, female candidates may be penalized if committee members are less familiar with the topic. To investigate this mechanism, we proxy the research area of the thesis using the scientific field of the advisor and test whether the estimated effects are driven by a mismatch between the thesis's research field and that of the other committee members or the committee president.[12] As before, we split the sample into two groups: students whose advisor belongs to the same field as the committee president and those whose advisor belongs to a different field. Although imprecisely estimated, coefficients in Columns (3) and (4) are very similar in magnitude. We therefore conclude that field mismatch does not meaningfully explain the gender gap in laude awards, as the estimated effects do not differ systematically across the two groups.

Table 4: Heterogeneous effects

	High F2MLFP	Low F2MLFP	Same SSD	Diff SSD	Fem Advisor	Male Advisor	Tenured	Non-tenured	Fem Pres	Male Pres
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Male Majority	0.0072	-0.0034	-0.0074	0.0200	0.0432	0.0005	-0.0153	0.0082	-0.0536	0.0142
	(0.0200)	(0.0238)	(0.0241)	(0.0173)	(0.0321)	(0.0161)	(0.0321)	(0.0150)	(0.0742)	(0.0144)
Male Majority × Female	-0.0555*	-0.0160	-0.0356	-0.0461*	-0.1054***	-0.0233	-0.0004	-0.0616***	0.1191	-0.0587***
	(0.0303)	(0.0338)	(0.0335)	(0.0256)	(0.0405)	(0.0247)	(0.0437)	(0.0218)	(0.0895)	(0.0224)
Observations	3,059	3,090	2,479	3,766	1,731	4,592	1,661	4,540	1,080	5,105

Notes: The table reports OLS regressions of Equation (1), where the sample is restricted to subgroups reported in column headers. All regressions include graduation year fixed effects, comparable to column (4) of Table 3; standard errors are clustered at the committee level.

Committee dynamics. Heterogeneity based on advisors' characteristics provides useful insights about the mechanisms at play. We first notice that most of the effect is concentrated among students supervised by a female advisor (a gap of 11 p.p. against 2 p.p. for students with male advisor, Columns 5 and 6). Moreover, the effect is driven by non-tenured advisors (a gap of 6 p.p. against no gap for students with tenured advisors, Columns 7 and 8). We further estimate that the negative effect on laude awards for female students in male-majority committees disappears when the president of the committee is female. This set of results is consistent with the findings of Karpowitz et

[12]Unfortunately, the administrative data do not record thesis titles; we therefore infer the thesis's broad research area from the advisor's macro field.

al. (2024) who show that women's influence within groups is highly sensitive to both the group's gender composition and the presence of female leadership. These results align with our interpretation that the lack of same-gender support within male-dominated committees may limit the recognition of female students' achievements.

4.3 Requests for laude

While the heterogeneity analysis above is informative about potential mechanisms, it does not allow us to distinguish whether the estimated effect reflects committee deliberation dynamics or differences in students' performance during the defense. To shed light on this issue, we exploit information on laude requests submitted by advisors. After committees are formed, their members receive an email indicating the date and time of the defense, the composition of the committee, and the guidelines for the discussion. These guidelines specify the range of points that can be awarded, the characteristics a thesis should have to receive a given number of points, and the requirements for awarding laude. They also indicate that advisors should inform the chair and the other committee members before the defense when they consider a thesis eligible for laude.

A key feature of these requests is their timing: committees are first formed and disclosed to members; advisors then observe the committee composition; and only after this information is available, but before the defense takes place, advisors submit their laude requests. As already mentioned in Section 2.1, these requests are not recorded in the administrative data, although they represent a common and explicitly recognized practice. We therefore manually collected this information for 155 committees evaluating 1,080 students, corresponding to approximately 18% of the full sample.

We start by replicating our baseline result in this subsample. In Table 5, column (1) uses the laude award as the dependent variable and yields a sizeable gender gap, consistent with our main results (Table 3, column 1). In column (2), we use the advisor's laude request as the outcome. The interaction coefficient is negative, similar in magnitude to the coefficient for laude awards, and statistically significant at the 10% level. This evidence provides two main takeaways. First, the gender gap is already visible at the request stage: female candidates are less likely to be put forward for laude by their advisors when assigned to male-majority committees. Second, because requests are submitted after committee composition is known to advisors but before the defense takes place, the disparity is unlikely to be driven solely by events occurring during the final defense or committee discussion. Rather, the evidence suggests that part of the

Table 5: Gender gap in laude requests

	(1) Laude	(2) Request
Male Majority	-0.014	-0.005
	(0.024)	(0.024)
Male Majority × Female	-0.067*	-0.062*
	(0.037)	(0.037)
Constant	0.348***	0.347***
	(0.013)	(0.013)
Observations	1,080	1,080
Graduation Year	Yes	Yes
GPA × Female	Yes	Yes
MSc	Yes	Yes

Notes: The table reports OLS regressions of Equation (1), where the sample is restricted to the committees for which laude requests are available (n=155). All regressions include graduation year fixed effects, female and GPA dummies; standard errors are clustered at the committee level.

gap emerges at the advisor nomination stage, consistent with advisors adjusting their decision to nominate candidates in response to anticipated committee support.

A simple rationalization: strategic requests under anticipated committee support. We provide a simple framework to rationalize why gender gaps may already emerge at the request stage. The central idea is that requesting *laude* is not a costless action. A request is a necessary condition for receiving the honor, but it also makes the candidate's case salient to the full committee and requires the advisor to stand behind the nomination. If the request is unsuccessful, the advisor may incur a reputational cost, as the nomination reveals that the candidate was put forward for an honor that the committee ultimately did not award. The student may also face costs if the request triggers additional scrutiny and, in the extreme scenario, puts the final maximum grade of 110 at risk. Thus, advisors may condition their request decision not only on their own assessment of the candidate, but also on their beliefs about how the committee will respond to the nomination.

Consider an advisor supervising a candidate who is at the margin of receiving *laude*.

Before the defense, the advisor chooses whether to submit a request,

$$r_i \in \{0, 1\}.$$

If no request is submitted, the candidate cannot receive *laude*; for a marginal candidate, this corresponds to a baseline outcome without honors, and we normalize the advisor's payoff to zero. If a request is submitted and the candidate receives *laude*, the advisor obtains payoff $B > 0$. If a request is submitted but the candidate does not receive *laude*, the advisor obtains payoff $-C$, where $C > 0$ captures the expected cost of an unsuccessful nomination. This cost primarily reflects the advisor's reputational cost, but may also include expected costs for the student if the request leads to greater scrutiny.

Let

$$p_{ig}(M) = \Pr(L_i = 1 \mid r_i = 1, g_i = g, M_i = M)$$

denote the advisor's perceived probability that candidate i, of gender g, receives *laude* if nominated before a committee of type M. Let $M = 1$ indicate a male-majority committee and $M = 0$ indicate a committee that is not male-majority. Importantly, $p_{ig}(M)$ is not only a belief about the candidate's quality; it is a second-order belief about how the committee will receive and support the nomination.

The expected payoff from submitting a request is

$$EU(r_i = 1 \mid g_i = g, M_i = M) = p_{ig}(M)B - [1 - p_{ig}(M)]\, C.$$

The advisor submits a request if and only if

$$p_{ig}(M) \geq \tau, \qquad \text{where} \qquad \tau \equiv \frac{C}{B + C}.$$

The threshold expected probability of laude, therefore, is increasing in the reputational cost C and decreasing in the laude payoff B.

The framework shows how second-order beliefs can generate lower request rates for female candidates in male-majority committees. Suppose that, for otherwise comparable female candidates, advisors expect lower committee support in male-majority committees:

$$p_{iF}(1) < p_{iF}(0).$$

Then, some female candidates whose perceived probability of success would exceed the request threshold in non-male-majority committees may fall below the threshold in male-

majority committees:

$$p_{iF}(0) \geq \tau > p_{iF}(1).$$

These candidates would be nominated in non-male-majority committees but not in male-majority committees. Aggregating across candidates, let $F_{F,M}(p)$ denote the distribution of perceived success probabilities for female candidates facing committees of type M. Since advisors submit requests only when perceived success probabilities exceed τ, the probability of a request is

$$\Pr(r_i = 1 \mid g_i = F, M_i = M) = 1 - F_{F,M}(\tau).$$

If perceived success probabilities for female candidates are shifted downward in male-majority committees, then $F_{F,1}(\tau) > F_{F,0}(\tau)$, so that

$$\Pr(r_i = 1 \mid g_i = F, M_i = 1) < \Pr(r_i = 1 \mid g_i = F, M_i = 0).$$

Thus, the framework rationalizes a lower frequency of *laude* requests for female candidates in male-majority committees. The logic is not that advisors necessarily value female candidates less, nor that only female candidates are scrutinized. Rather, if advisors anticipate lower committee support for female candidates in male-majority committees, the expected return to making a nomination falls. This can lead to strategic under-nomination at the request stage, even before the committee makes its final decision.[13] Note that strategic under-nomination does not require male commissioners to actually value, *caeteris paribus*, female students' defences less, but only the *expected* lack of support by male colleagues is sufficient for this outcome to emerge.

4.4 Labor Market Outcomes

A remaining question is whether exposure to male-majority committees is associated with subsequent labor-market outcomes. To address this question, we examine the post-graduation labor market outcomes of students in our sample. As described in Section 2, the university administers a follow-up survey to graduates one, three, and five years after graduation. Overall, approximately 50% of students in our administrative data are

[13]The same logic applies if advisors expect female candidates' defenses to be less successful in male-majority committees, rather than only expecting lower committee support for a given defense. In both cases, the request decision depends on advisors' second-order beliefs about the committee environment and the likelihood that a nomination succeeds.

observed in at least one wave of this survey.

To estimate the differential effects of assignment to a male-majority committee on labor market outcomes, we adopt the same specification used in Table 3, Column (1), estimating it separately for survey responses collected one year (Panel A), three years (Panel B), and five years (Panel C) after graduation.

We first assess whether assignment to a male-majority committee differentially affects the probability of responding to the survey for female relative to male students. The coefficients reported in Column (1) of Table 6 are small in magnitude and statistically insignificant across all survey waves. These findings help rule out selective attrition as a source of bias in our subsequent estimates of employment and earnings outcomes.

As expected for MSc graduates in economics from a major university, the probability of being employed is already extremely high and shows little variation. Consequently, the estimates for employment probability are small and insignificant, indicating that committee gender composition does not meaningfully affect the likelihood of securing a job (column 2 of Table 6). However, the results for earning outcomes point to more concerning patterns. In the first year after graduation, female graduates assigned to male-majority committees are 6.4 percentage points less likely to belong to the top 25% of the salary distribution (between 1750 and 2000 euros per month, column 3). This difference is statistically significant and translates into an average net monthly wage penalty of approximately €64 compared to their male peers (column 4). This result is in line with the evidence documented by Bovini et al. (2024), who find persistent gender gaps in early-career earnings among Italian graduates.

This gap fades over time as educational credentials are gradually replaced by labor-market experience, in line with Hansen et al. (2024) and Khoo and Ost (2018). Interestingly, however, the probability of working in the public sector (column 5) continues to display a negative effect of male-majority committees on female students five years after graduation. This evidence is consistent with the institutional setting of public-sector recruitment, where entry is subject to public competitions in which laude honors are valued and boost candidates' chances of securing the job.

Table 6: Labor Market Outcomes

	(1) Respond =1	(2) Employed	(3) Salary (top 25%)	(4) Salary (€)	(5) Public Sector
Panel A: First year after graduation					
Male Majority × Female	0.017	0.007	-67.032*	-0.064**	-0.001
	(0.026)	(0.020)	(37.600)	(0.029)	(0.017)
Constant	0.468***	0.920***	1,385.890***	0.153***	0.039***
	(0.011)	(0.008)	(15.209)	(0.011)	(0.007)
Observations	7,372	3,520	3,144	3,144	3,200
R-squared	0.049	0.098	0.147	0.116	0.050
Panel B: Three years after graduation					
Male Majority × Female	-0.023	0.024	25.130	-0.010	-0.009
	(0.023)	(0.017)	(54.262)	(0.046)	(0.018)
Constant	0.301***	0.962***	1,852.830***	0.533***	0.026***
	(0.009)	(0.007)	(25.216)	(0.021)	(0.007)
Observations	7,372	2,298	2,201	2,201	2,206
Panel C: Five years after graduation					
Male Majority × Female	-0.017	0.015	11.441	-0.010	-0.053**
	(0.019)	(0.019)	(89.387)	(0.054)	(0.024)
Constant	0.194***	0.975***	2,114.543***	0.713***	0.045***
	(0.009)	(0.008)	(33.474)	(0.021)	(0.009)
Observations	7,372	1,520	1,479	1,479	1,460

Notes: All regressions include graduation year dummies, MSc program dummies, pre-defense GPA dummies, each interacted with the female indicator. In Column (4), we use the midpoint (central value) of each wage bracket to approximate individual wages. Standard errors are clustered at the committee level.

Our findings suggest that while exposure to male-majority committees does not affect the extensive margin of employment, it does contribute to an economically relevant gap in early-career earnings for female graduates. The latter result suggests that gender bias in academic evaluations can have lasting consequences.

5 Conclusion

This paper examines whether the gender composition of graduation committees affects students' academic distinctions and subsequent labor market outcomes. Exploiting plausibly exogenous variation in committee composition driven by faculty availability, we

show that female students evaluated by male-majority committees are significantly less likely to receive laude honors, while male students are unaffected. The effect is concentrated among candidates at the margin of excellence and is robust to the inclusion of extensive controls, advisor fixed effects, and committee fixed effects. Importantly, we find no comparable gaps in other graduation outcomes, such as final grades or thesis points. The disparity emerges only for laude, an honor that requires unanimous committee approval. Evidence from advisor laude requests—submitted prior to the defense—indicates that the gender gap arises at the stage when advisors signal a candidate's suitability for the distinction. Finally, we show that these differences in academic distinction have economically meaningful consequences. While assignment to a male-majority committee does not affect employment probabilities, female graduates exposed to such committees are less likely to earn top-quartile wages in the first years after graduation and experience lower early-career earnings. Although these gaps attenuate over time, they indicate that gender differences in the allocation of academic distinctions can shape labor-market outcomes at career entry

Our results highlight the importance of institutional design in high-stakes evaluation settings. The allocation of *laude* requires nomination, deliberation, and unanimous approval. Our findings suggest that gender composition and formal authority within committees can affect this process, shaping which students receive a distinction that separates excellent from otherwise high-achieving graduates.

These findings have several policy implications. One possible response is to increase gender balance in evaluation committees. However, in settings where women remain underrepresented among faculty, this solution may impose disproportionate service burdens on female professors. A less demanding alternative is to pay attention to leadership within committees: our results suggest that assigning a woman to chair male-majority committees may mitigate gender gaps in the allocation of honors. A further possibility is to separate the nomination stage from the realization of committee composition, for example by requiring advisors to submit *laude* requests before committees are formed. Such a reform could reduce strategic under-nomination based on anticipated committee support, although it may also discourage requests by risk-averse advisors if unsuccessful nominations remain costly. More generally, our evidence points to the value of procedural designs that make excellence nominations less dependent on deliberative dynamics within male-majority committees.

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Appendix (for on-line publication only)

Table A.1: Male majority committees and laude honours – Students at risk of laude

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Male Majority	0.0132	0.0081	0.0038	0.0178	
	(0.0238)	(0.0245)	(0.0253)	(0.0275)	
Male Majority X Female	-0.0640**	-0.0769**	-0.0698**	-0.0733**	-0.0641
	(0.0289)	(0.0308)	(0.0315)	(0.0349)	(0.0428)
Constant	0.5827***	0.5861***	0.5879***	0.5852***	0.5949***
	(0.0123)	(0.0119)	(0.0123)	(0.0136)	(0.0173)
Observations	3,386	3,301	3,266	3,122	2,998
Controls:					
Graduation Year	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
GPA x Female	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
MsC x Year x GPA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Students' char. x Female	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Advisor x Female	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Committee FE	No	No	No	No	Yes

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Notes: The table reports OLS regressions of Equation (1). Structure and specifications are analogous to Table 3. The sample is restricted to students with starting GPA of at least 102, i.e., the group of student for which achieving laude is feasible.

Table A.2: Share of female examiners and laude honours

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
% Female Examiners	0.0138	0.0315	0.0321	0.0108	-4.5635**
	(0.0221)	(0.0258)	(0.0267)	(0.0292)	(2.0008)
% Female Examiners X Female		0.0517	0.0455	0.0626	0.0467
		(0.0359)	(0.0371)	(0.0399)	(0.0429)
Constant	0.2460***	0.2430***	0.2482***	0.2536***	1.8628***
	(0.0067)	(0.0076)	(0.0079)	(0.0084)	(0.7023)
Observations	7,373	7,023	6,865	6,730	6,715
R-squared	0.697	0.729	0.733	0.764	0.807
Graduation Year	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
GPA x Female	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
MsC x Year x GPA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Students' char. x Female	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Advisor x Female	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Committee FE	No	No	No	No	Yes

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Notes: The table reports OLS regressions of Equation (1). Structure and specifications are analogous to Table 3. The treatment is defined as being assigned to a committee where the majority of examiners *other than student's supervisor* are males.

Table A.3: Male majority committees and laude honours – Leave-one-out treatment

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Male Majority	0.0031	0.0029	0.0033	0.0103	0.0063
	(0.0095)	(0.0108)	(0.0110)	(0.0116)	(0.0233)
Male Majority X Female	-0.0309**	-0.0432***	-0.0388**	-0.0396**	-0.0366**
	(0.0132)	(0.0154)	(0.0160)	(0.0162)	(0.0177)
Constant	0.2690***	0.2773***	0.2796***	0.2763***	0.2780***
	(0.0060)	(0.0064)	(0.0065)	(0.0067)	(0.0143)
Observations	7,373	7,023	6,865	6,730	6,715
Controls:					
Graduation Year	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
GPA x Female	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
MsC x Year x GPA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Students' char. x Female	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Advisor x Female	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Committee FE	No	No	No	No	Yes

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Notes: The table reports OLS regressions of Equation (1). Structure and specifications are analogous to Table 3. The treatment is defined as being assigned to a committee where the majority of examiners *other than student's supervisor* are males.

Table A.4: Male majority committees and "pieni voti"

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Male Majority	-0.0074	-0.0169***	-0.0137**	-0.0104	
	(0.0063)	(0.0062)	(0.0061)	(0.0070)	
Male Majority × Female	0.0050	0.0113	0.0079	0.0041	0.0050
	(0.0075)	(0.0075)	(0.0077)	(0.0090)	(0.0096)
Constant	0.8392***	0.8656***	0.8698***	0.8688***	0.8615***
	(0.0033)	(0.0032)	(0.0032)	(0.0035)	(0.0035)
Controls:					
Graduation Year	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
GPA x Female	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
MsC x Year x GPA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Students' char. x Female	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Advisor x Female	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Committee FE	No	No	No	No	Yes
Observations	7,373	7,023	6,865	6,730	6,715

Notes: The table reports OLS regressions of Equation (1). Structure and specifications are analogous to Table 3. The dependent variable is an indicator equal to one if a student achieves at least 100 points as graduation mark, a threshold locally known as "full marks", in Italian, "pieni voti".

Table A.5: Male majority committees and achieving at least 105 points

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Male Majority	-0.0102	-0.0122	-0.0120	-0.0098	
	(0.0077)	(0.0085)	(0.0088)	(0.0092)	
Male Majority × Female	0.0135	0.0122	0.0133	0.0099	0.0062
	(0.0094)	(0.0101)	(0.0105)	(0.0114)	(0.0127)
Constant	0.6330***	0.6522***	0.6585***	0.6591***	0.6534***
	(0.0042)	(0.0044)	(0.0046)	(0.0049)	(0.0046)
Controls:					
Graduation Year	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
GPA x Female	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
MsC x Year x GPA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Students' char. x Female	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Advisor x Female	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Committee FE	No	No	No	No	Yes
Observations	7,373	7,023	6,865	6,730	6,715

Notes: The table reports OLS regressions of Equation (1). Structure and specifications are analogous to Table 3. The dependent variable is an indicator equal to one if a student achieves at least 105 points as graduation mark.