their grades, says Jessica Ranucci ’10, one of the “Big Question” organizers this year. In its three years, the series has explored such topics as whether pursuing a career in business necessarily means “selling out,” and whether popular spring-break-week community-service trips really help, or are better summed up as “service tourism.”

Of course, a major reason for articulating one’s morals and values is to make it possible to choose a career that fits those beliefs. President Drew Faust gave graduating seniors one last nudge in that direction during her baccalaureate address in June: “A liberal education demands that you live self-consciously. It prepares you to seek and define the meaning inherent in all you do.”

Faust began that speech by noting that numerous students and recent graduates had expressed concern to her about the number of Harvard alumni going into consulting and finance. Reiterating this message before alumni at the Harvard Gay and Lesbian Caucus anniversary in September (see “Coming Out at Harvard,” page 70), Faust said she got the impression that some students felt their career choices were not entirely voluntary: “I felt they were asking permission to do something different.”

Efforts abound to introduce students to that “something different.” The Office of Career Services (OCS) has launched a campaign to “turn up the volume” on career options other than investment banking and consulting. (“We didn’t want to turn down the volume on opportunities in consulting and finance,” explains OCS interim director Robin Mount. “We have one of the top programs in the country, and we’re really proud of that.”) The OCS fall schedule of events includes sessions on fields ranging from fashion design, museum administration, and social work to the ministry, fiction writing, culinary arts, and the military. The schedule also includes new events that invite students to discuss financial careers frankly (“Banking and Consulting: Myths and Realities”). And there is now a “career reflection” category (sessions include “Finding a Meaningful Path: What’s Your Story?”). The number of graduates who take jobs in banking and consulting is not well established. A Crimson survey found that...