

IDEA Benchmarking for Learning Report



Insight. Improvement. Impact. ®

Summary for:

University of Alaska Anchorage

Report date: 7/29/2010

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1: How to Use This Report

The *IDEA Benchmarking for Learning* report allows campuses to compare their student ratings results to a group of 6 to 10 peers, selected by the institution, who also use the IDEA Student Ratings System. In addition, comparative data are provided for all campuses and for campuses in the same general Carnegie classification code that also use IDEA. Data are provided for at least three and up to five of the most recent academic years so trends can be examined. Rather than using averages to provide comparative data, the percentage of students or faculty offering positive ratings (usually the two highest categories of each response scale) is used.

This report is different from other IDEA summary reports because it summarizes the learning of individual students rather than summarizing class results.¹

Other Considerations

Comparative information, while useful, needs to be interpreted with caution. Important things to consider that may impact results:

- **Response rate.** It is important to review the response rates for your institution and for all of the comparison groups to see if differences exist. One advantage of using IDEA data is response rates to student ratings are typically higher than other on-campus surveys. Nonetheless, response rate differences may still exist.
- **Representativeness.** Differences may exist between how institutions use IDEA. Some campuses may administer IDEA to all classes every semester while others may administer to a subset of classes each semester. Also, it is important to know that the relative influence of each peer will vary as institutions you select may use IDEA at different levels. In an effort to maintain confidentiality, the percentage of ratings contributed by each peer is not provided.

Using the Information

The large number of cases included in a benchmarking report make finding statistical significance a frequent occurrence. However, these differences may not be of practical significance. Differences of 5% or less are likely of little importance. Differences between 5% and 10% may merit closer investigation. Differences of more than 10% are relatively rare and should be further examined.

It is always important to review findings from the IDEA benchmarking service with other sources of information that address the same or similar topics (local surveys, National [or Community College] Survey of Student Engagement, etc.). If similar differences are found from multiple sources of information, confidence of it being a meaningful finding is substantially increased. If findings in this report are unique, taking the time to develop possible explanations is warranted.

¹ By using the student as the unit of analysis, class size matters as a larger class will have more ratings and therefore more influence than a smaller class. If the class was the unit of analysis, a class with 100 students responding and a class of 10 would have equal weight. This report focuses on individual student learning and therefore it was viewed to be inappropriate for classes of disparate sizes to have the same influence on overall student learning reported at the institution.

2: Report Summary

The peer institutions you have selected to be included in this report are:

Note: Your institution has agreed not to identify any of the names of selected peers in any marketing or public relations material.

Cameron University
Eastern New Mexico University
Jacksonville State University
Morehead State University
New Jersey City University
Sam Houston State University
Southeast Missouri State University
Truman State University
University of Central Missouri

Your Carnegie Group: Masters

Number of classes included:

Your institution	6,793
Peers	44,431
Carnegie Group	192,722
National	614,406

Number of ratings provided by students:

Your institution	43,748
Peers	801,886
Carnegie Group	3,446,839
National	9,243,337

Response rate:

Your institution	31.5%
Peers	71.5%
Carnegie Group	78.4%
National	75.6%

Average number of objectives selected per class:

Your institution	7.1
Peers	5.5
Carnegie Group	5.5
National	5.4

3: Overall Progress on Learning

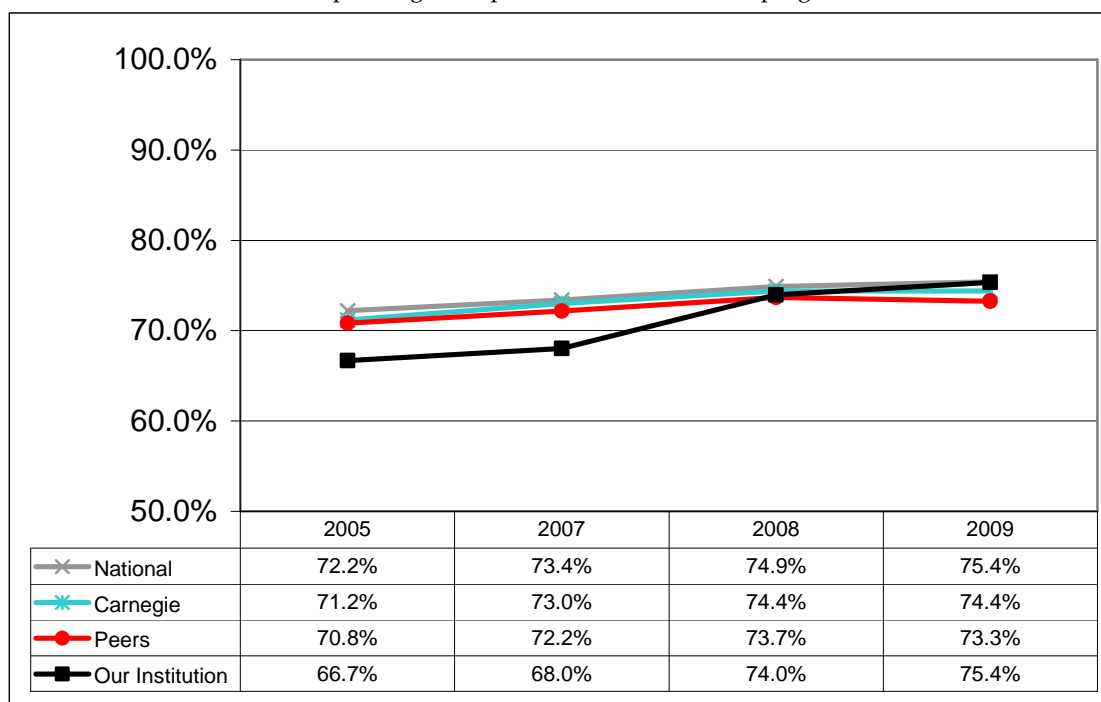
This section addresses the amount of overall progress on learning students believed they made in their classes and allows you to compare your institution's results to the three comparison groups. The percent of students reporting "Exceptional" or "Substantial" progress on learning objectives that were selected as "Essential" or "Important" by their instructors is provided.

Graph 3.1 summarizes the results for all classes at all levels over time. Graphs 3.2-3.7 summarize results by course level and purpose (e.g., general education, major/certificate) as reported on the Faculty Information Form.

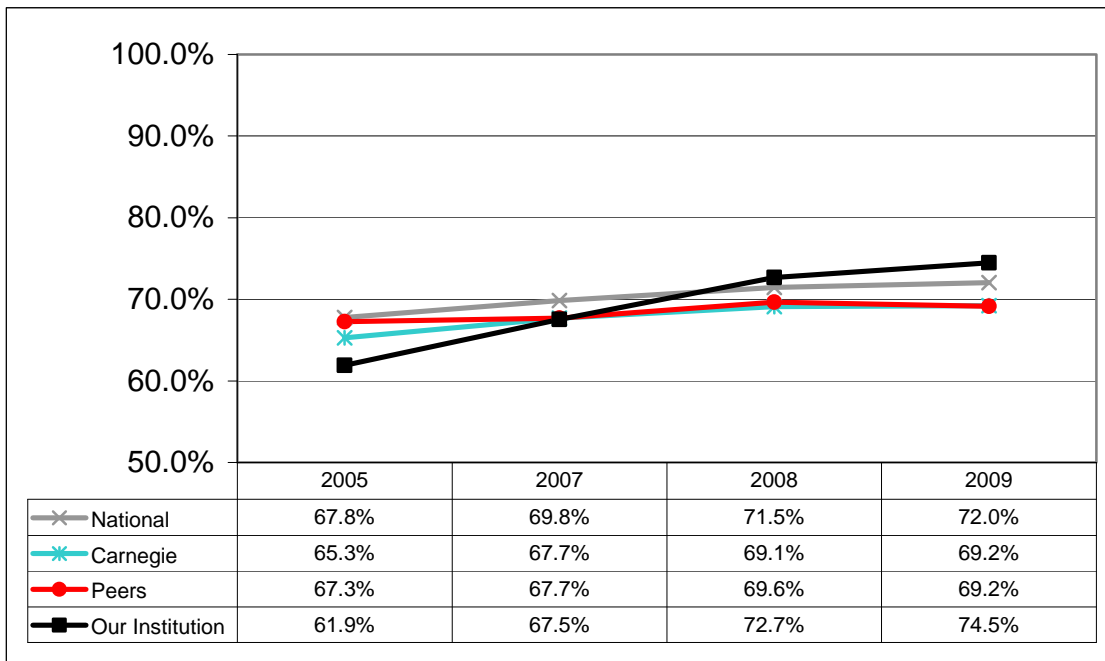
The information in this section can be used to explore such questions as:

- How do my institution's results compare to my peers?
- Have there been changes over time?
- Are results for certain levels and purposes different from the overall results?
- When comparing my institution's results to the comparison groups', is the pattern similar regardless of course level and purpose?

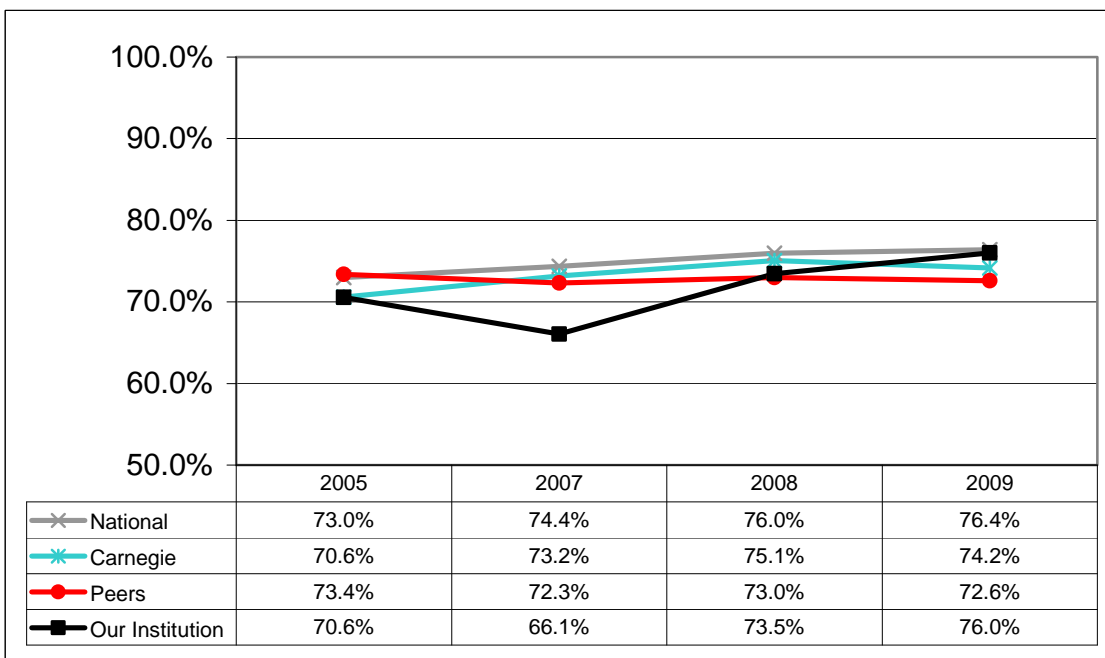
Graph 3.1
Progress on Relevant Objectives
 % responding "Exceptional" or "Substantial" progress



Graph 3.2
Progress on Relevant Objectives:
First-year students/sophomores seeking to meet a "general education" or
"distribution" requirement
 % responding "Exceptional" or "Substantial" progress

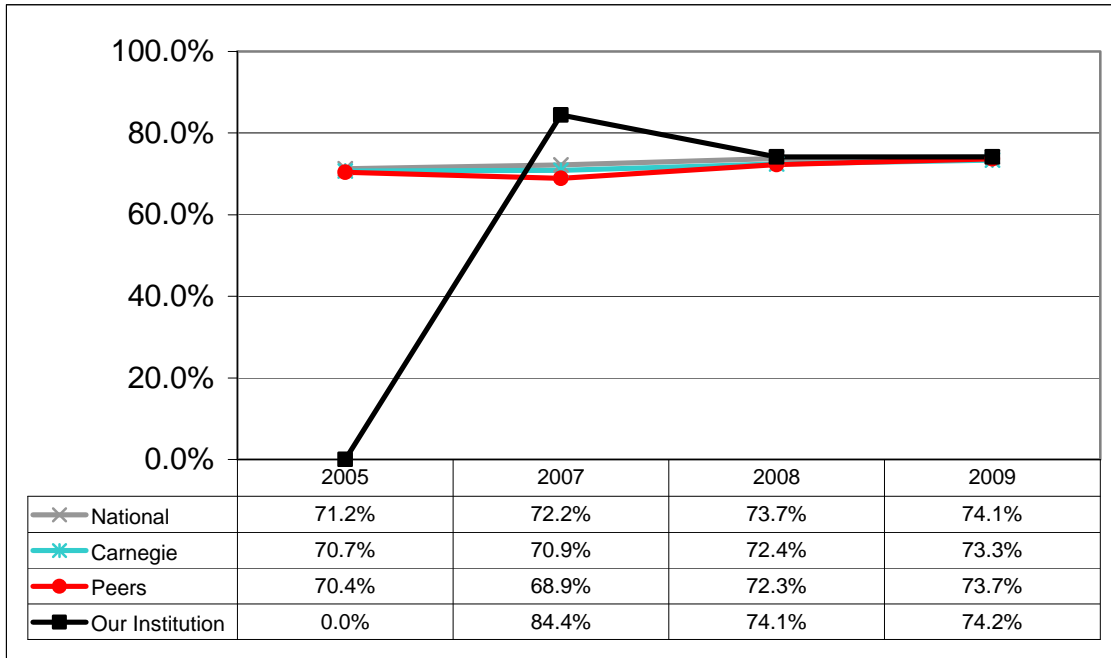


Graph 3.3
Progress on Relevant Objectives:
First-year students/sophomores seeking to develop background needed
for their intended specialization
 % responding "Exceptional" or "Substantial" progress



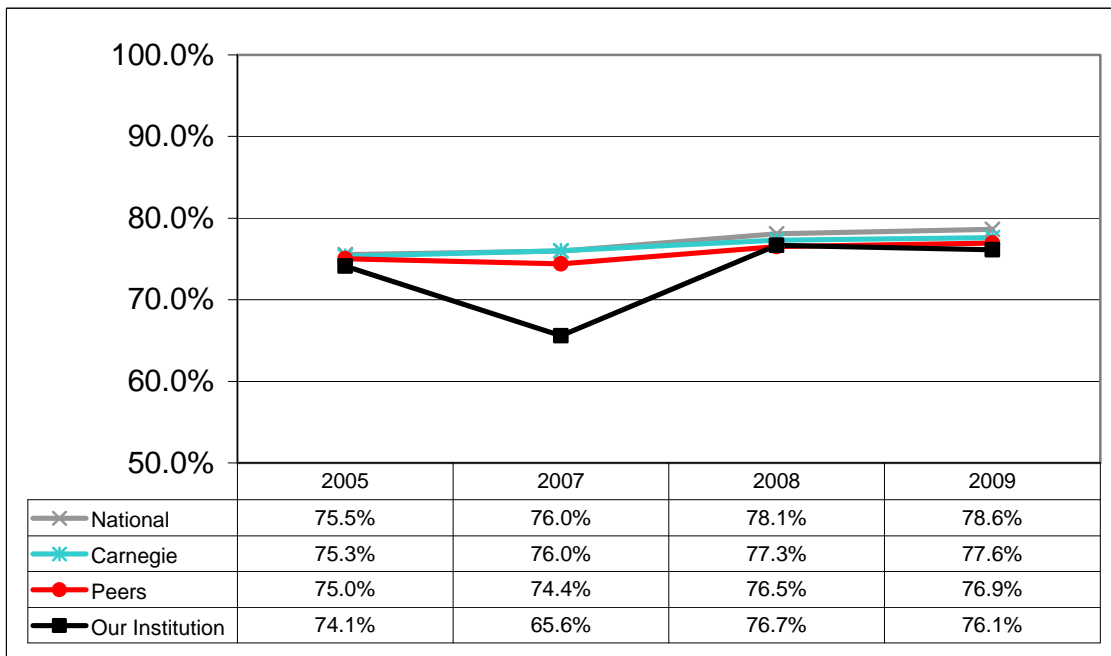
Graph 3.4
Progress on Relevant Objectives:
Upper level non-majors taking the course as a "general education" or
"distribution" requirement

% responding "Exceptional" or "Substantial" progress

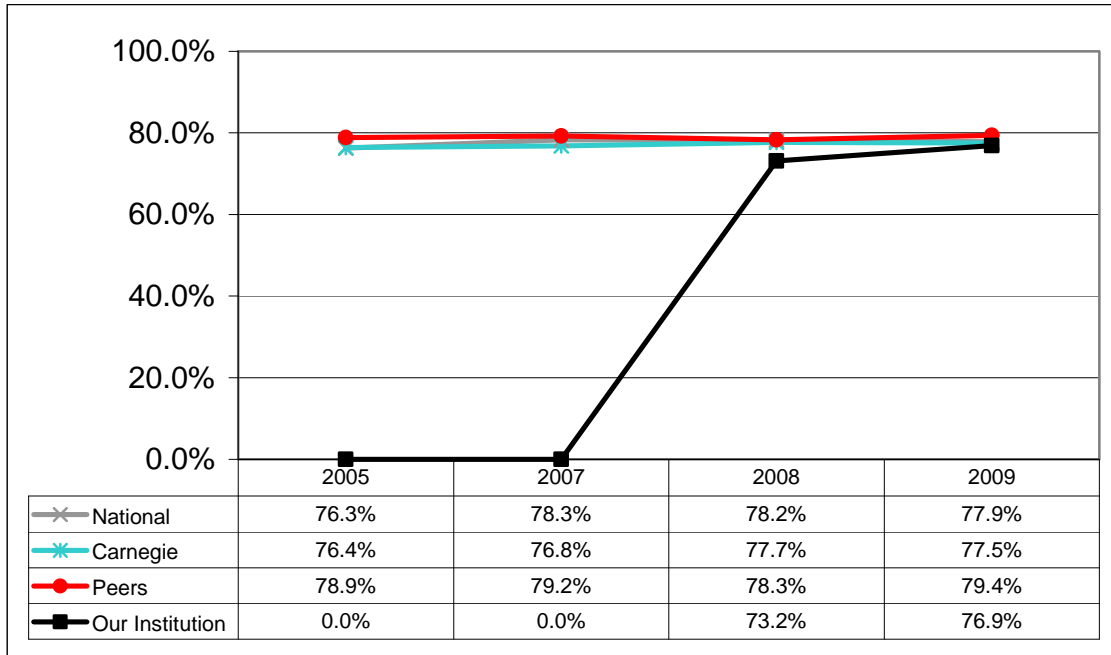


Graph 3.5
Progress on Relevant Objectives:
Upper level majors (in this or a related field of study) seeking
competence or expertise in their academic/professional specialty

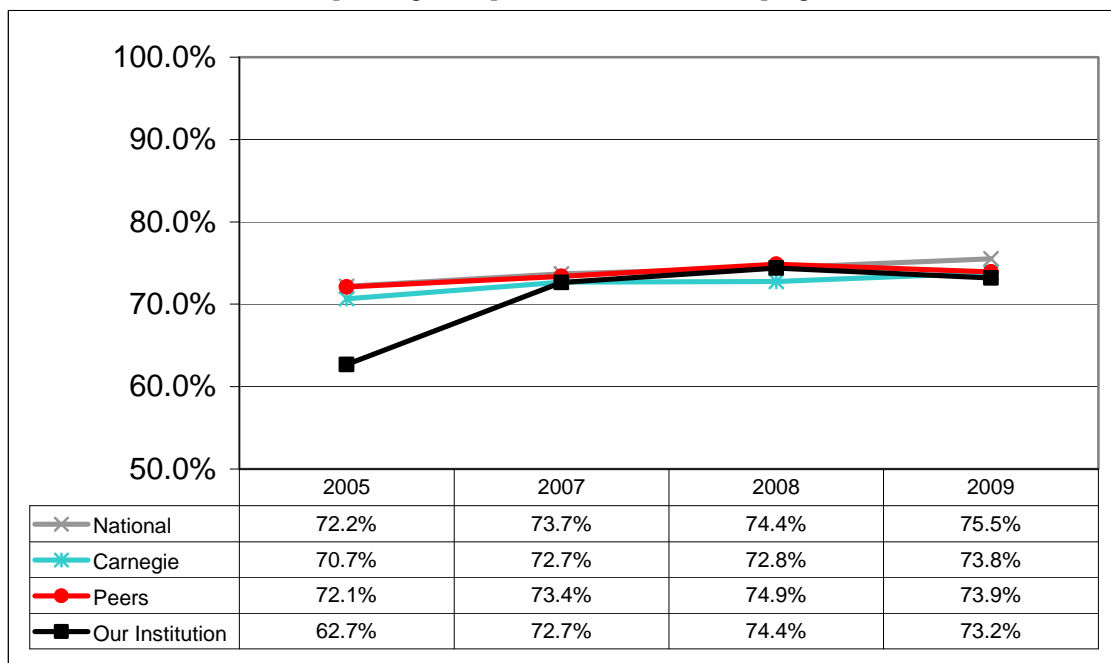
% responding "Exceptional" or "Substantial" progress



Graph 3.6
Progress on Relevant Objectives:
Graduate or professional school students
 % responding "Exceptional" or "Substantial" progress



Graph 3.7
Progress on Relevant Objectives:
Combination of two or more of the above types
 % responding "Exceptional" or "Substantial" progress



4: Frequency of Learning Objective Selection

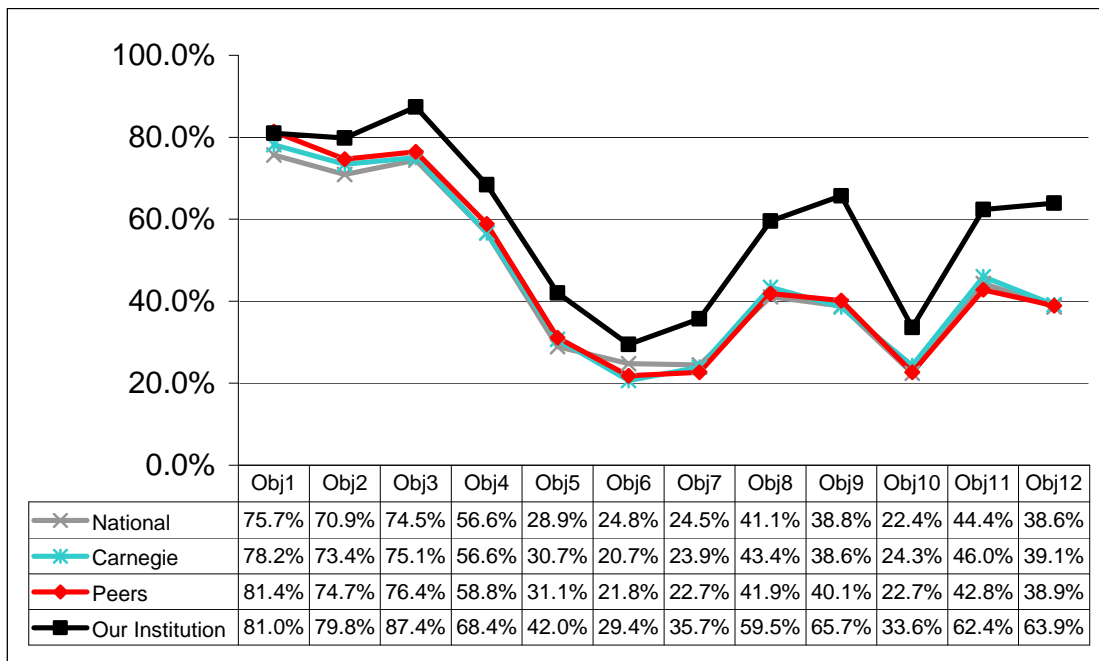
The graph (4.1) below describes how frequently instructors selected each objective for classes at your institution and how those results compare to the institutions you selected as peers, aggregated over time.

This graph explores the questions:

- Does our institution emphasize certain kinds of learning more or less frequently than our peers?
- Are there objectives that are not selected as frequently as desired?
- Is the learning emphasis consistent with our institutional mission?

Graph 4.1
Objectives Selected Compared to Peers

% of total classes where instructor selected objective as “Essential” or “Important”



Objectives are identified in Table 4.1 on the following page.

Table 4.1 IDEA Learning Objectives		See Detail...
Obj1	Gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends)	Page 23
Obj2	Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories	Page 24
Obj3	Learning to apply course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions)	Page 25
Obj4	Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course	Page 26
Obj5	Acquiring skills in working with others as a member of a team	Page 27
Obj6	Developing creative capacities (writing, inventing, designing, performing in art, music, drama, etc.)	Page 28
Obj7	Gaining a broader understanding and appreciation of intellectual/cultural activity (music, science, literature, etc.)	Page 29
Obj8	Developing skill in expressing oneself orally or in writing	Page 30
Obj9	Learning how to find and use resources for answering questions or solving problems	Page 31
Obj10	Developing a clearer understanding of, and commitment to, personal values	Page 32
Obj11	Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view	Page 33
Obj12	Acquiring an interest in learning more by asking questions and seeking answers	Page 34

Appendix A (pages 22-34) allows you to explore more detailed information about the objectives selected. It provides longitudinal data and comparative data for your Carnegie group and the IDEA national data base as well.

The following questions may be explored using Appendix A:

- Have there been changes in the kinds of learning our institution is emphasizing?
- Has our relative standing when compared to peers and other groups changed over time?
- If there are changes in our institutional data, are they expected because of curricular or program initiatives that have been instituted?

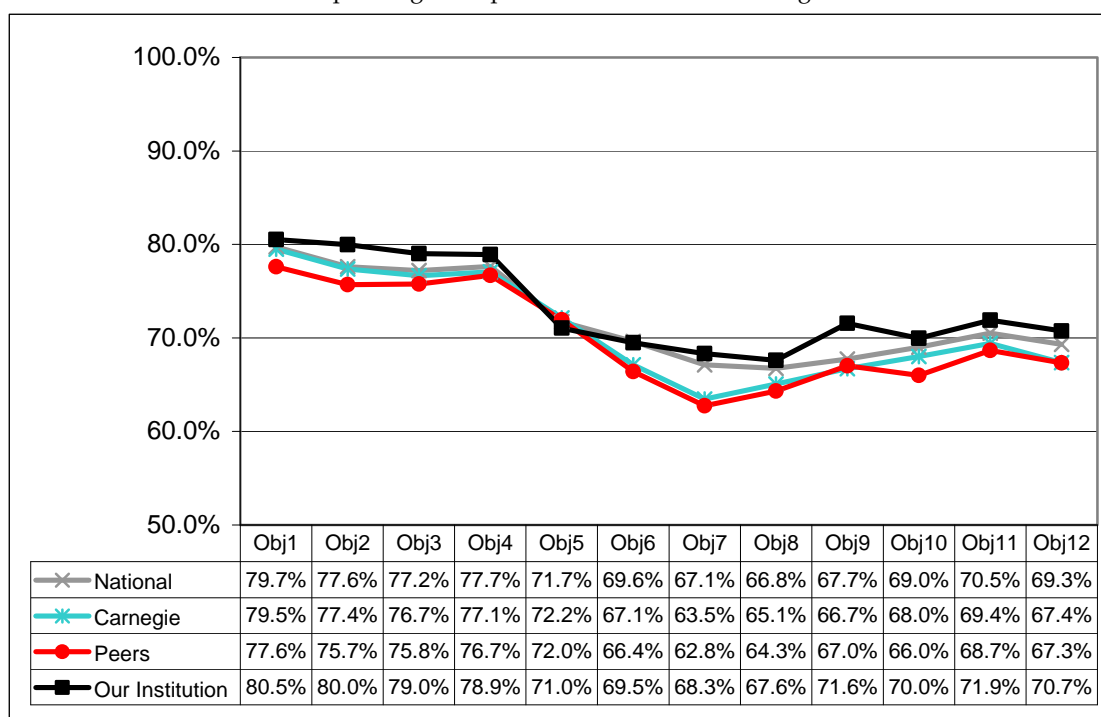
5: Progress on Learning

The graph (5.1) below reports the percentage of students who report making “Exceptional” or “Substantial” Progress on each of the 12 IDEA Learning Objectives when an instructor identified them as “Essential” or “Important” to the course. The results are aggregated over time.

Questions that may be addressed include:

- Are we more successful in addressing certain kinds of learning than others?
- Are student self-reported outcomes similar to our peers and other comparison groups?
- Is there a learning objective where improvement efforts might be focused?

Graph 5.1
Progress on Relevant Objectives
% responding “Exceptional” or “Substantial” Progress



Objectives are identified in Table 4.1.

With Appendix A (pages 22-34) you may explore changes for each objective over time, allowing questions to be addressed such as:

- Has self-reported learning at our institution changed for one or more objectives?
- Are our results becoming more or less favorable when compared to our peers or other groups for one or more of the objectives?
- Do the results for our institution reflect changes we have made in curricular or teaching initiatives?

6: Teaching Method Emphasis

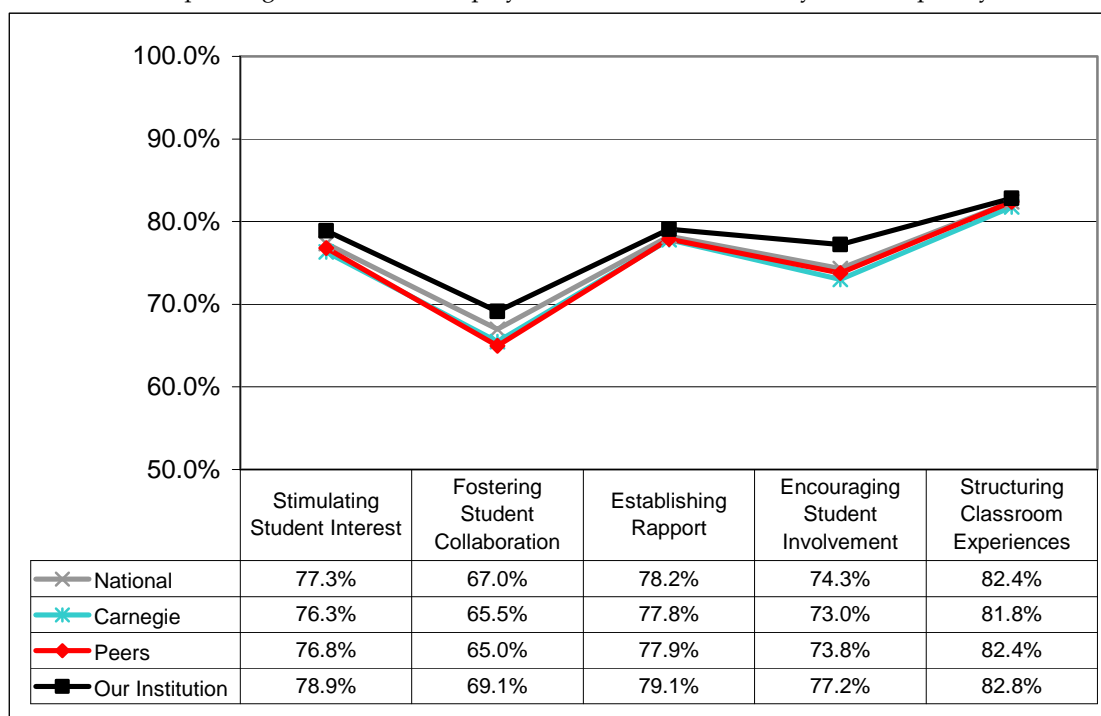
The graph (6.1) below provides comparisons between your institution and your peers for each of the five teaching methods scales, aggregated over time. Each scale contains three to five of the teaching methods listed on the IDEA Diagnostic Form (see Appendix B). The IDEA Center recognizes that the importance of any particular method is dependent upon the kind of learning you wish to accomplish. However when the data are aggregated the results serve as an indicator of how frequently your campus employs important teaching methods compared to your peer institutions and other groups. The IDEA model suggests that the more frequently relevant teaching methods are employed, the more learning will occur.

Questions this graph may address include:

- Do we employ all types of methods similarly?
- Do we employ methods more or less frequently than our peers, or other groups?

Graph 6.1 Teaching Methods and Styles

% responding that instructor employed methods "Almost Always" or "Frequently"



Appendix B (pages 35-39) again allows you to examine changes over time for your institution and the comparison groups.

- Are our results becoming more or less favorable when compared to our peers or other groups for one or more of the teaching methods and styles?
- Do the results for our institution reflect changes we have made in curricular or teaching initiatives?

7: Student Characteristics

The IDEA Center's research suggests that student characteristics such as motivation, work habits, and academic effort influence student learning. This section contains four graphs that examine these three areas.

The first two graphs (7.1 and 7.2) deal with student motivation and address slightly different questions. The first examines student desire to take a course based on its content. The second examines student desire to take a course because of who was teaching it.

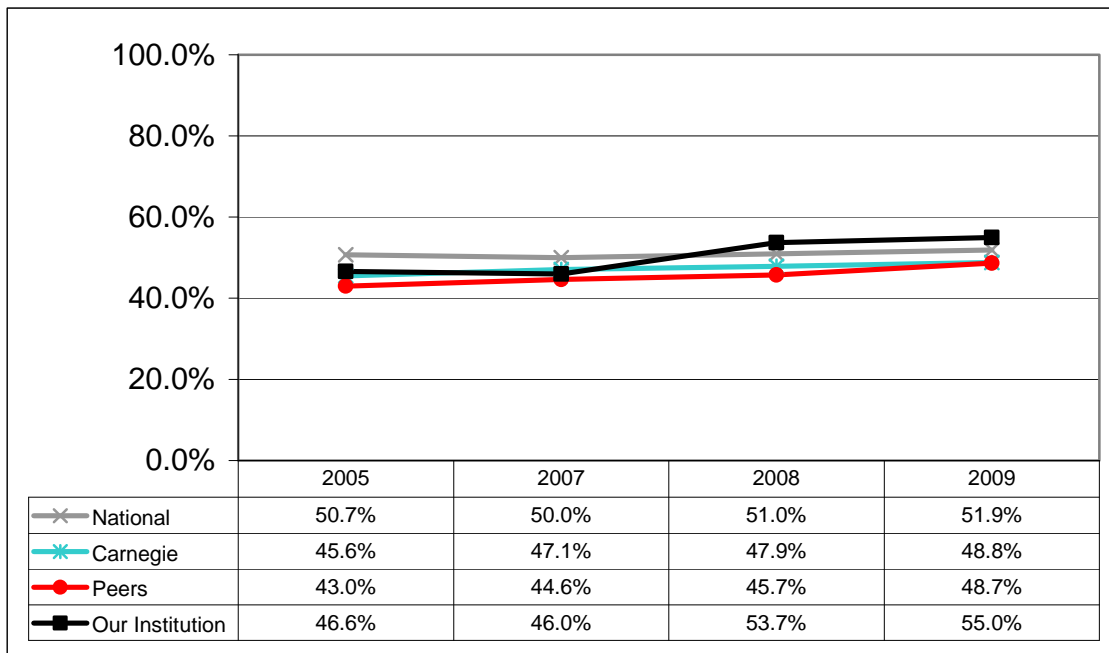
The first graph (7.1) is intended to address questions such as:

- How motivated are our students to take the courses in which they are enrolled?
- How similar is the motivation of our students compared to our peers or other comparison groups?
- Has motivation for our students changed over time and, if so, are they similar or different from our peers or other comparison groups?

Graph 7.1

I really wanted to take this course regardless of who taught it

% responding "Definitely True" or "More True than False"

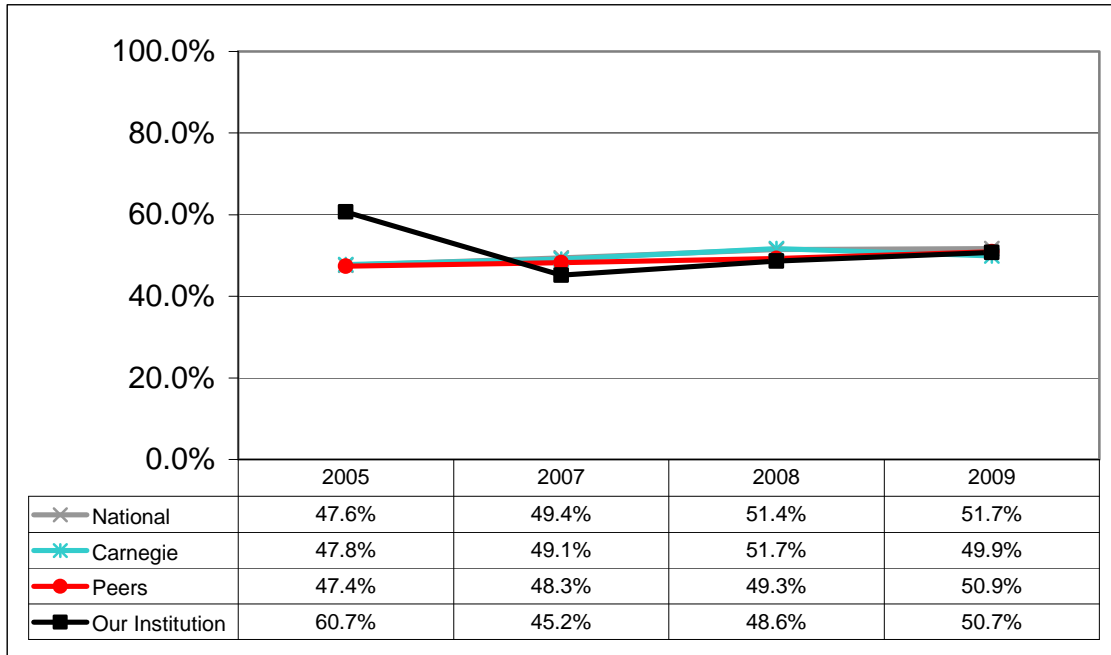


The second graph (7.2) examines questions about instructor popularity:

- Is instructor popularity different at our institution than at our peers or other groups?
- Has instructor popularity changed at our institution over time?

Graph 7.2
I really wanted to take a course from this instructor

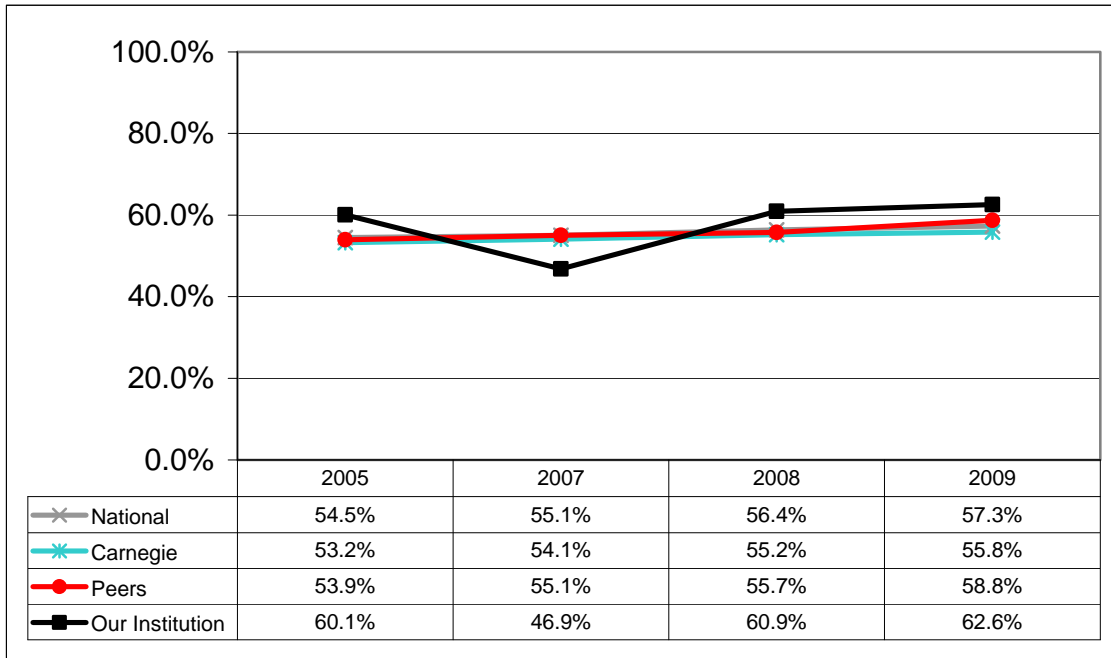
% responding "Definitely True" or "More True than False"



The following graph (7.3) addresses work habits by summarizing responses to how hard students worked in their classes and allows you to assess student perceptions of their course related effort. Again, comparisons with peers and other groups can be made as well as your institution's change over time.

Graph 7.3
I worked harder on this course than on
most courses I have taken

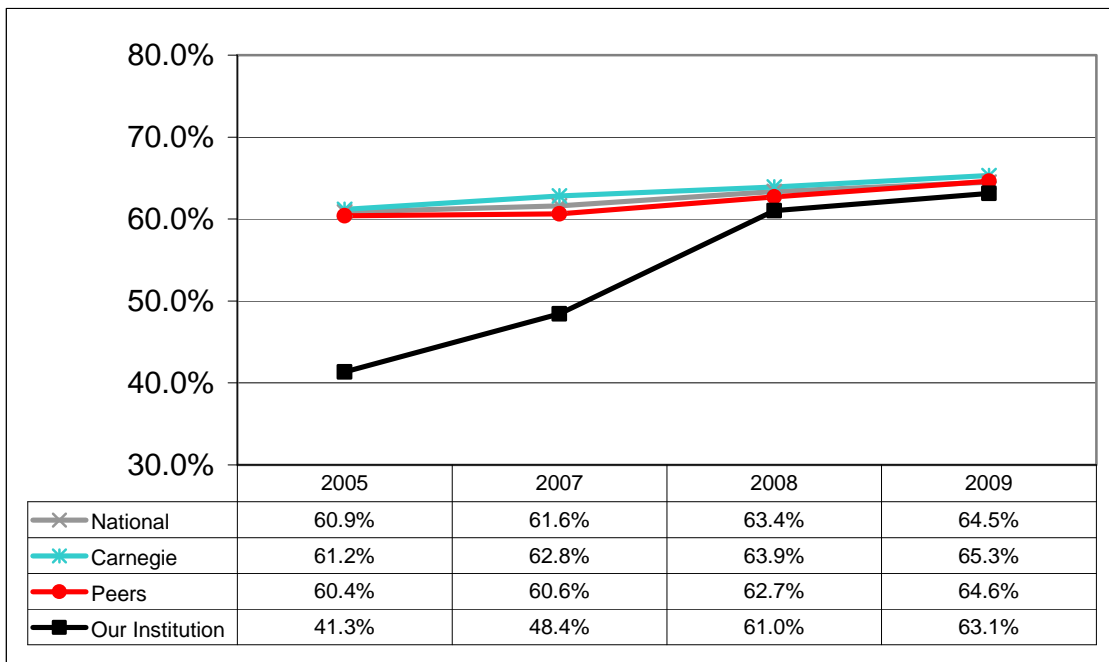
% responding "Definitely True" or "More True than False"



The final graph (7.4) in this section addresses academic effort by examining how students rate their typical work habits as compared to others. Student perceptions of effort at your institution may be compared to self-reported effort by students at other institutions over time.

Graph 7.4
As a rule, I put forth more effort than other students on academic work

% responding "Definitely True" or "More True than False"



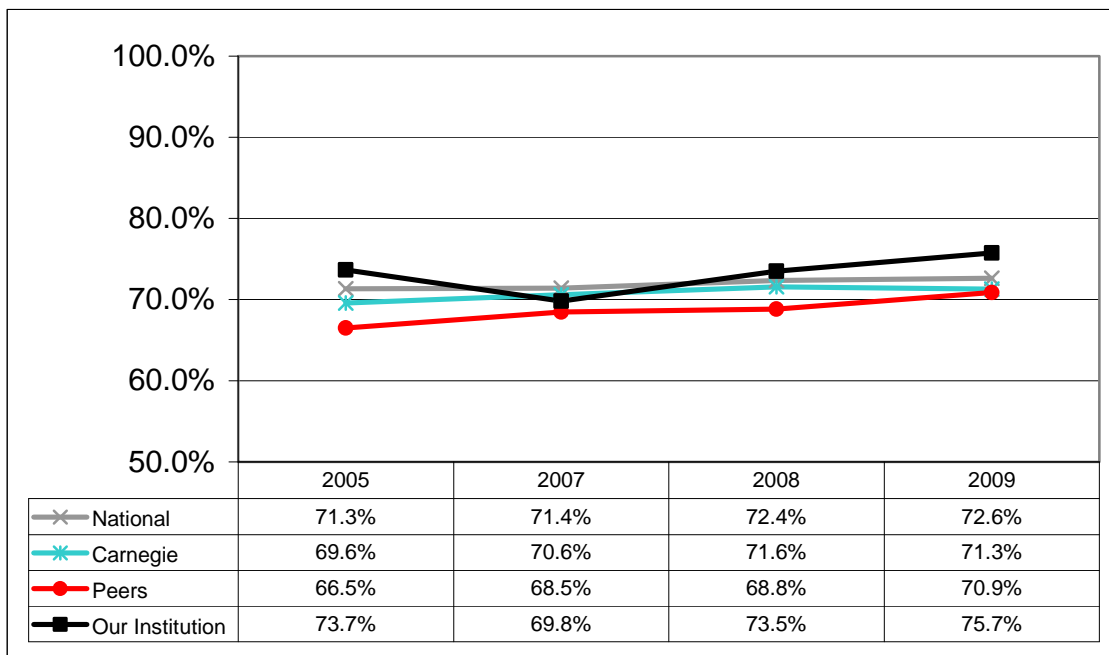
8: Summary Ratings of Effectiveness

The IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction system contains three global summary evaluation items:

- *As a result of taking this course, I have more positive feelings toward this field of study*
- *Overall, I rate this instructor an excellent teacher.*
- *Overall, I rate this course as excellent.*

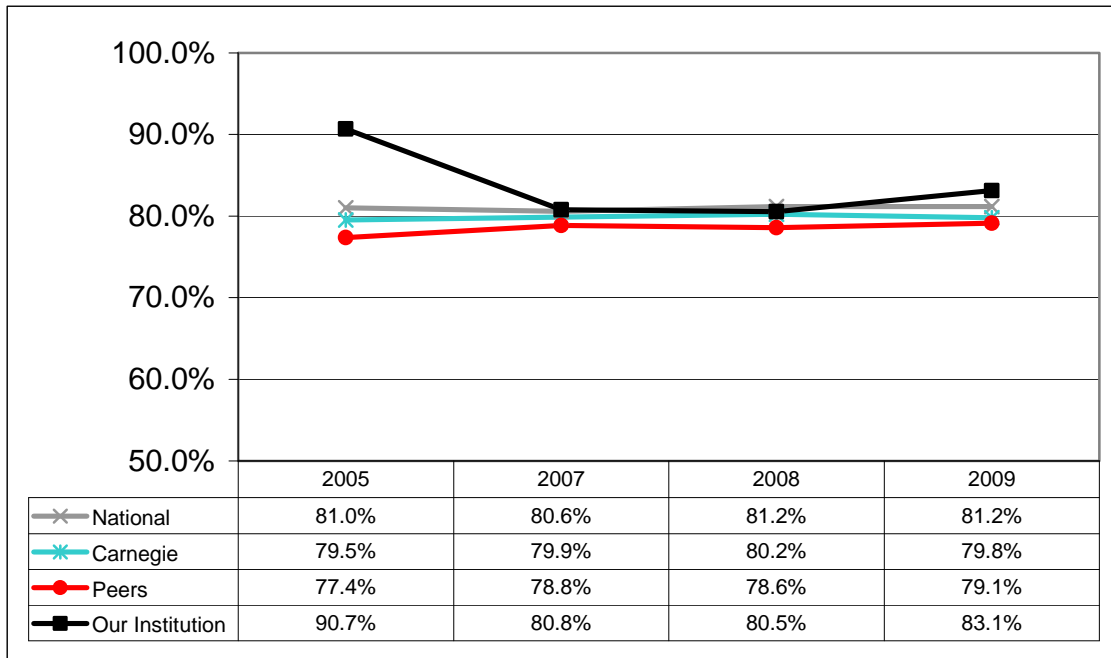
The following three graphs (8.1 – 8.3) summarize responses to those items over time for your institution, your peers, and other comparison groups.

Graph 8.1
As a result of taking this course, I have more positive feelings toward this field of study
 % responding "Definitely True" or "More True than False"



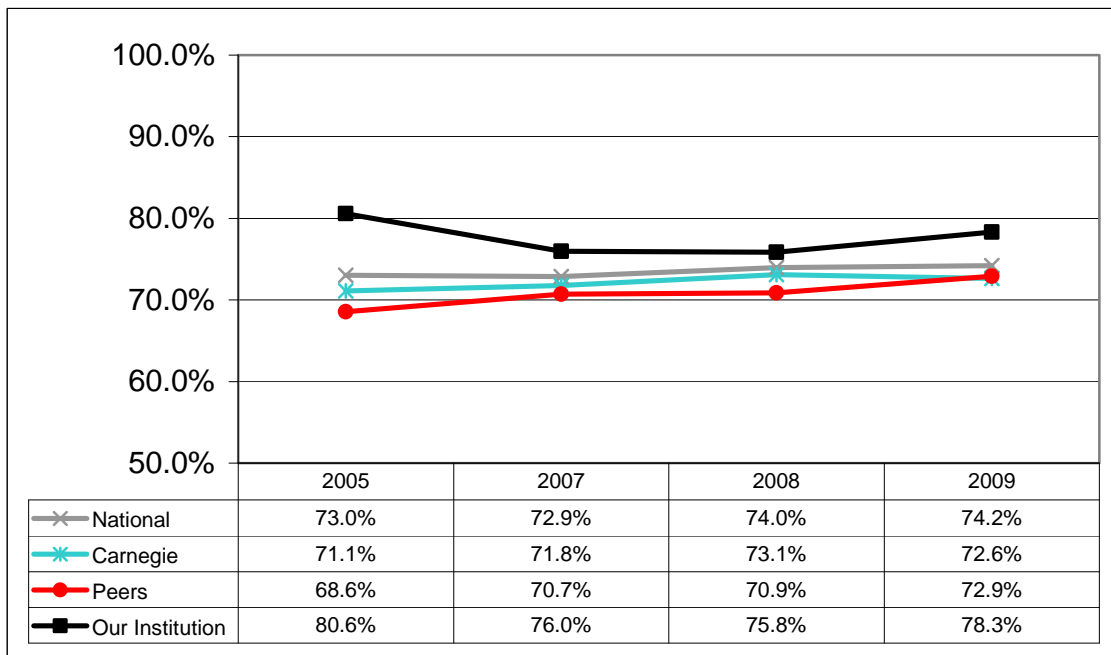
Graph 8.2 Overall, I rate this instructor an excellent teacher

% responding "Definitely True" or "More True than False"



Graph 8.3 Overall, I rate this course as excellent

% responding "Definitely True" or "More True than False"



9: Faculty Ratings of Other Impacts on Learning

The IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction system asks faculty to rate the impact (positive, negative, or neutral) that various circumstances had on learning in their classes.

Five of those circumstances are summarized in this section. They are:

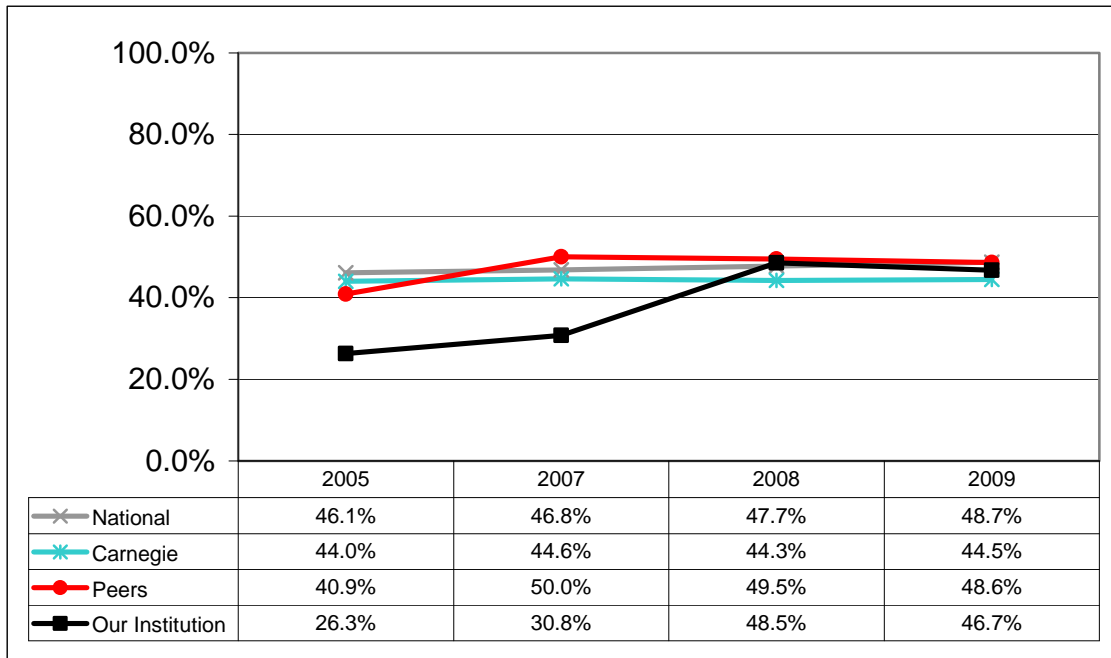
- Physical facilities and/or equipment
- Technical/instructional support
- Adequacy of students' background and preparation for the course
- Student enthusiasm for the course
- Student effort to learn

This information is useful in assessing faculty perceptions of instructional support (facilities, equipment, technology) and student characteristics. It allows you to address questions such as:

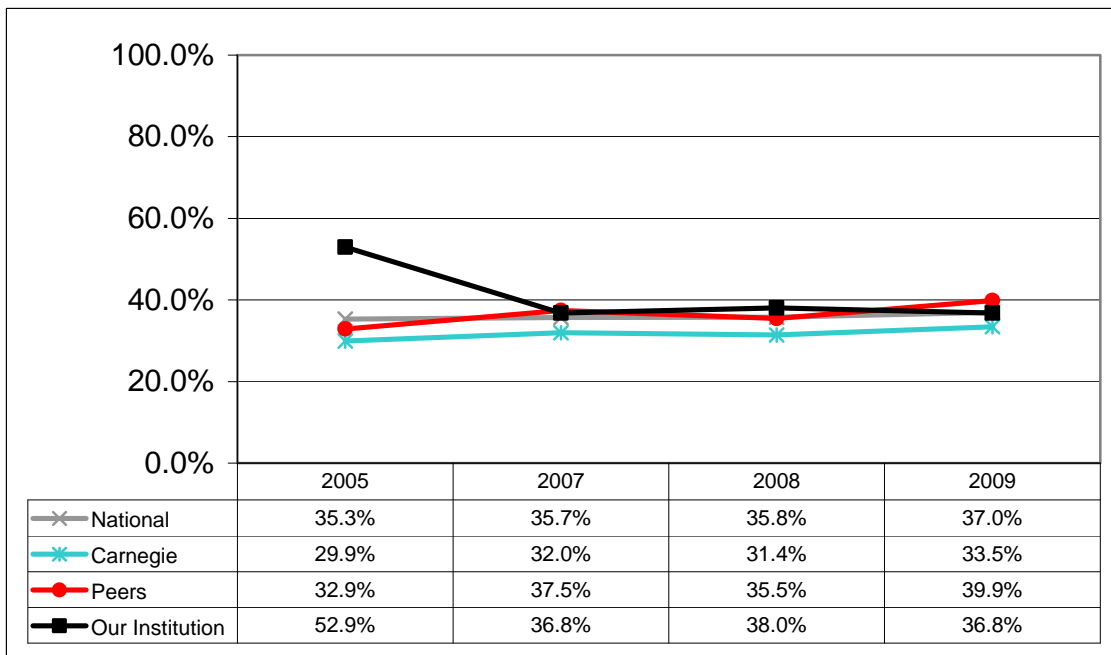
- Have faculty views about students at our institution changed over time?
- Are our facilities and technology viewed to positively support student learning?
- How do our results compare to those of our peers and other comparison groups?

Note: Instructors are not required to respond to these items on the Faculty Information Form; the percent of faculty who opt to complete them may vary substantially across institutions. This needs to be taken into consideration when you review the following five "circumstance" graphs (9.1 - 9.5).

Graph 9.1
Physical facilities and/or equipment
 % responding "Had a positive impact on learning"

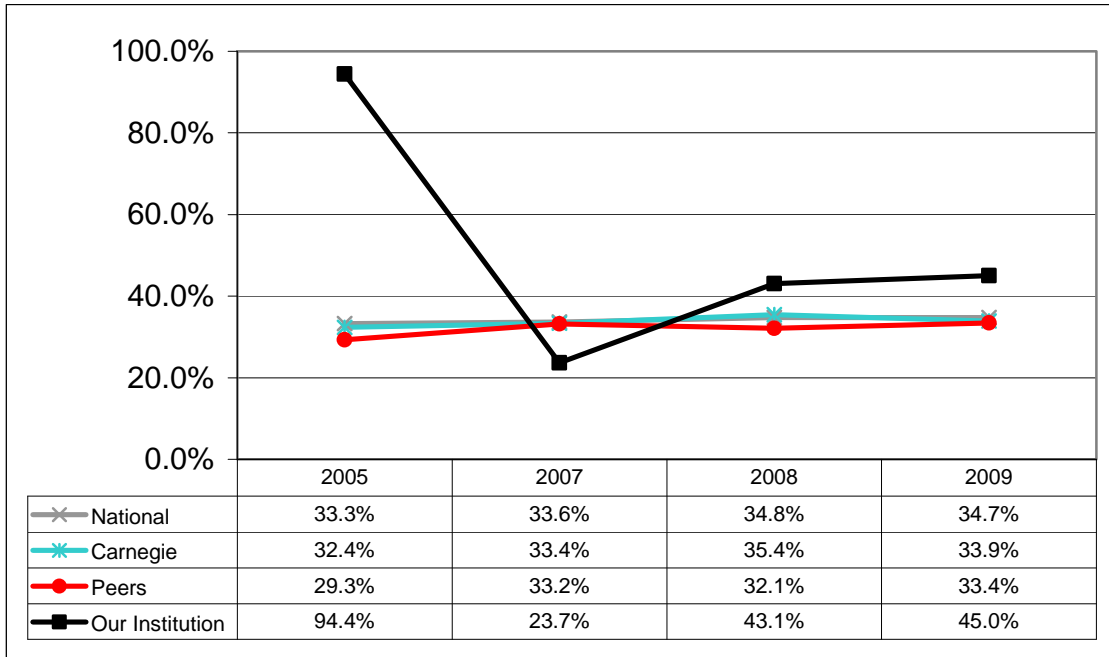


Graph 9.2
Technical/instructional support
 % responding "Had a positive impact on learning"



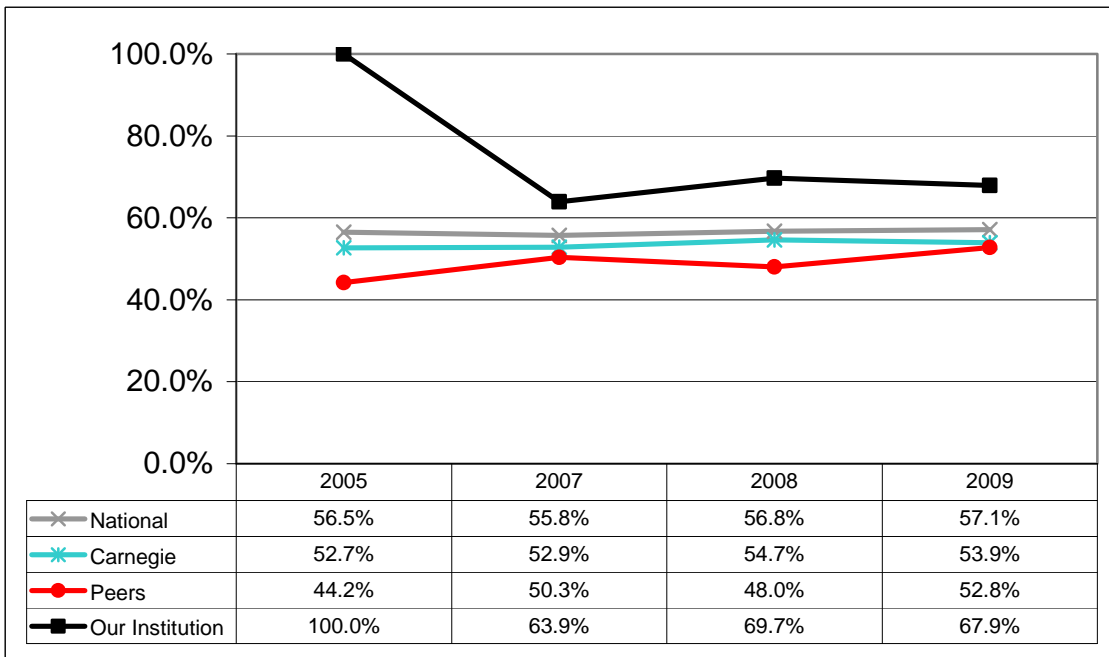
Graph 9.3 Adequacy of students' background and preparation for the course

% responding "Had a positive impact on learning"



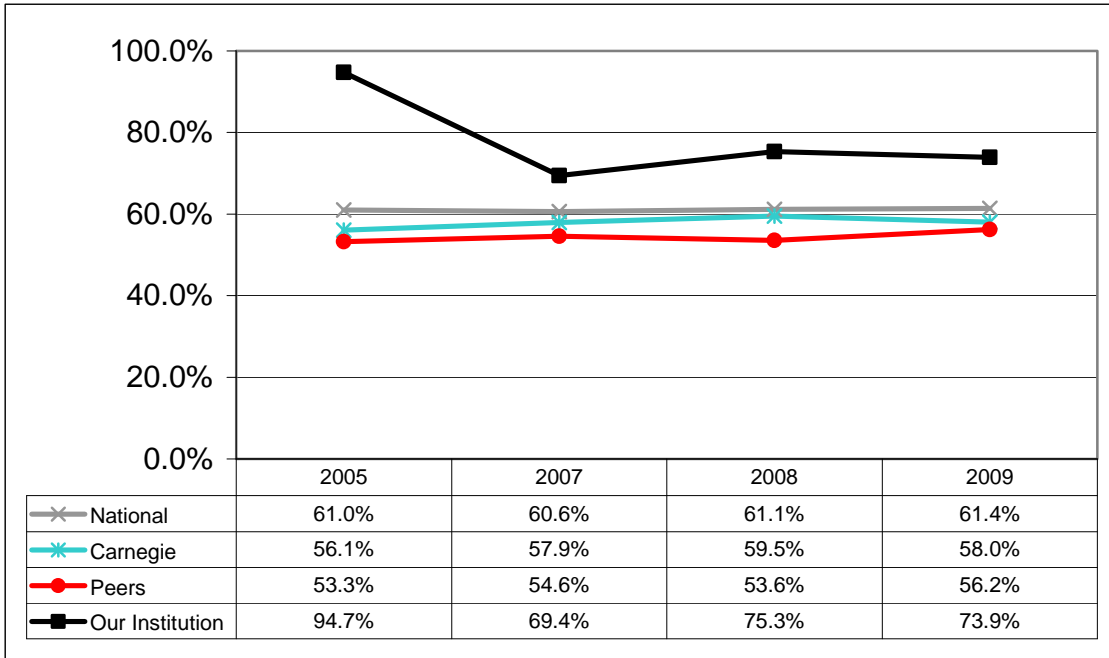
Graph 9.4 Student enthusiasm for the course

% responding "Had a positive impact on learning"



Graph 9.5 Student effort to learn

% responding "Had a positive impact on learning"



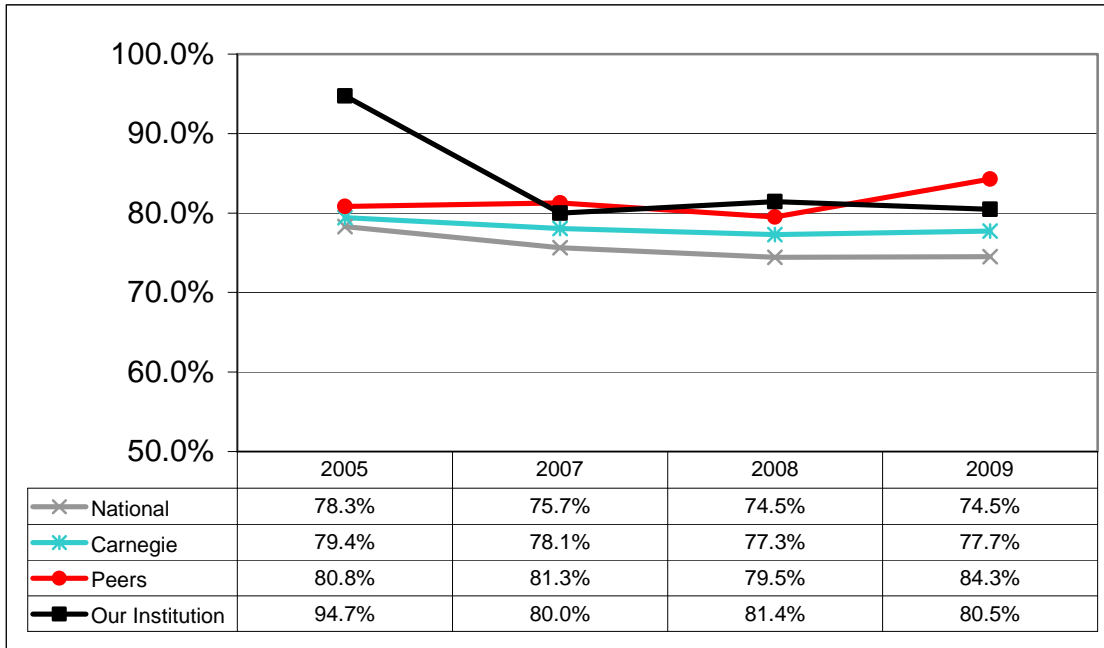
Appendix A: Learning Objective Selection and Progress Over Time

- Have there been changes in the kinds of learning our institution is emphasizing?
- Has our relative standing when compared to peers and other groups changed over time?
- If there are changes in our institutional data, are they expected because of curricular or program initiatives that have been instituted?
- Has self-reported learning at our institution changed over time for one or more objectives?
- Are our results becoming more or less favorable when compared to our peers or other groups for one or more of the objectives over time?
- Do the results for our institution reflect changes we have made in curricular or teaching initiatives?

Objective 1: Gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends)

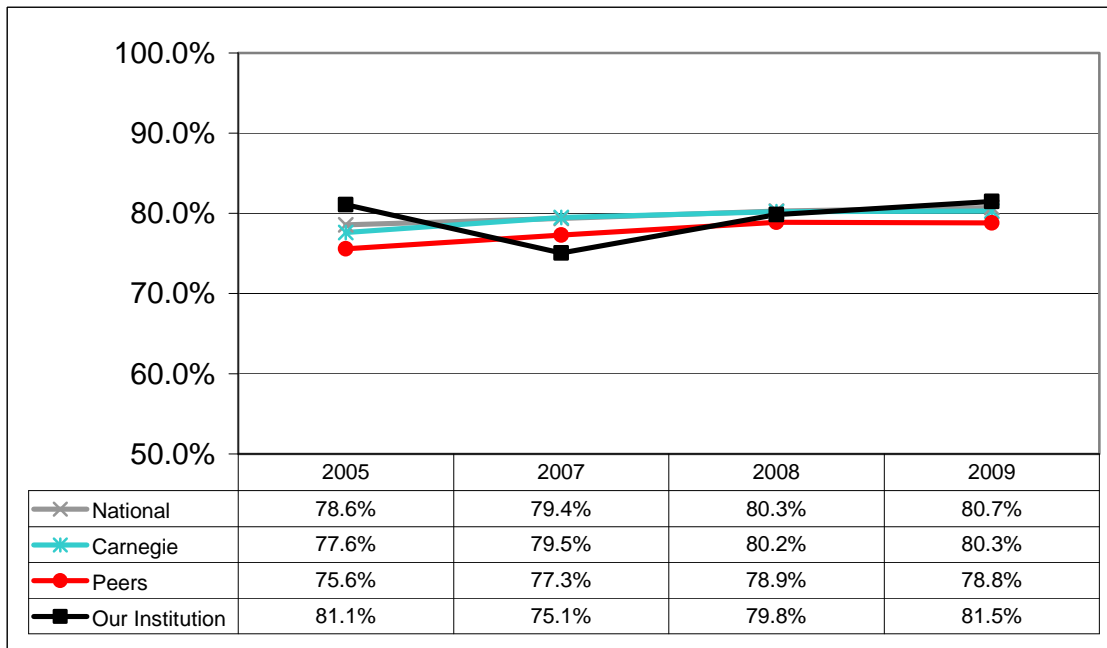
Graph A.1
Faculty Rating of Importance

% of total classes where instructor selected objective as "Essential" or "Important"



Graph A.2
Student Rating of Progress

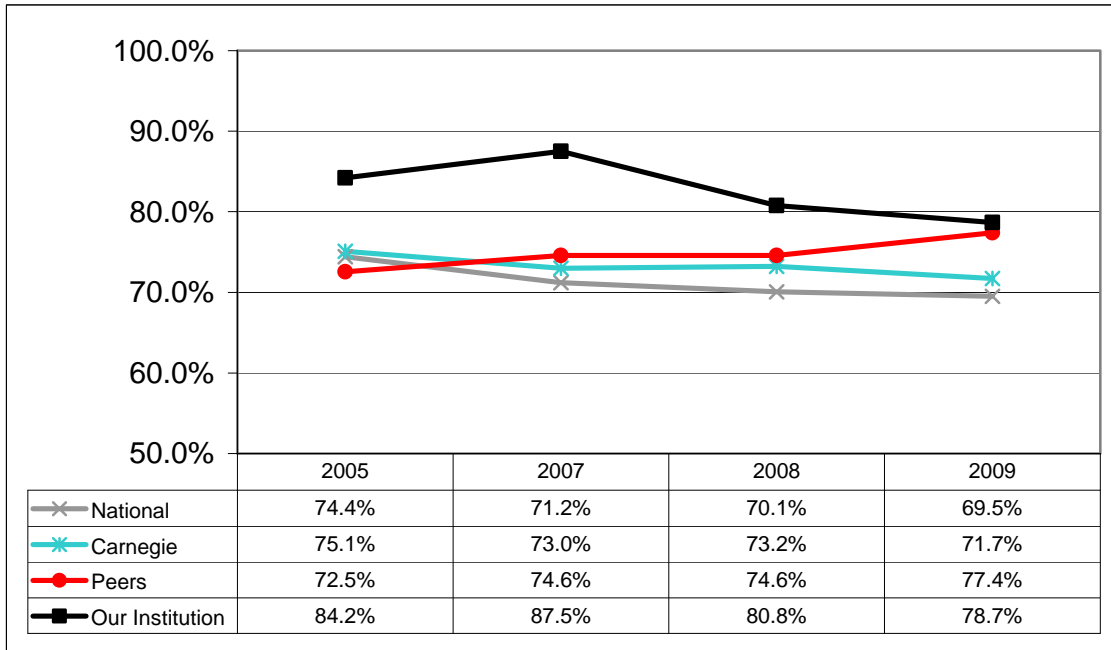
% responding "Exceptional" or "Substantial" progress



Objective 2: Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories

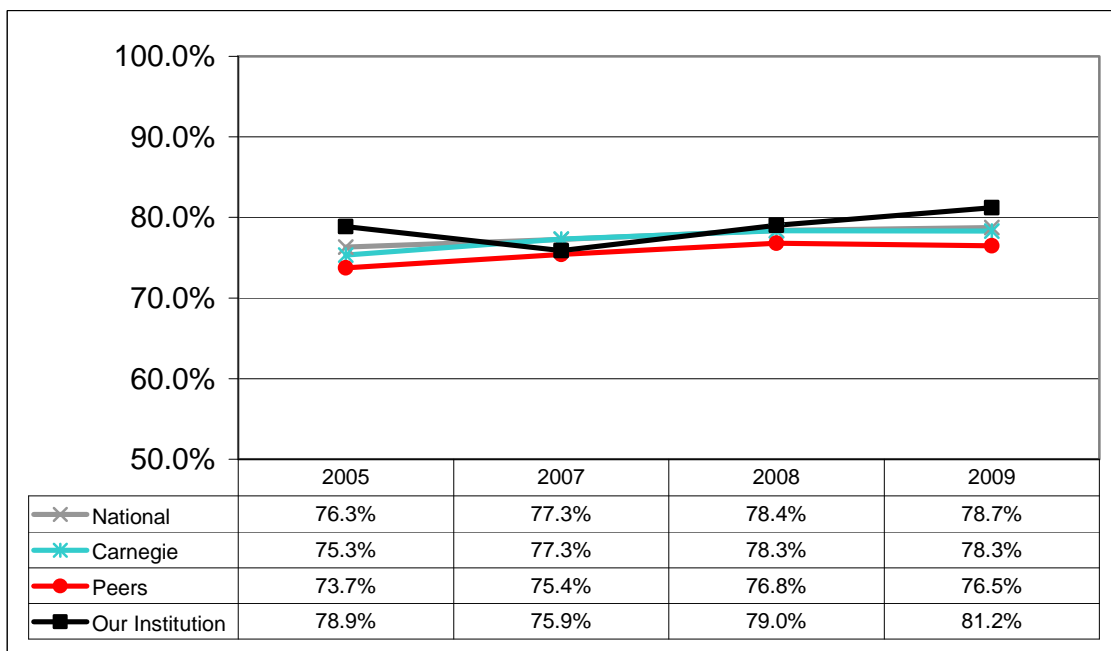
Graph A.3
Faculty Rating of Importance

% of total classes where instructor selected objective as "Essential" or "Important"



Graph A.4
Student Rating of Progress

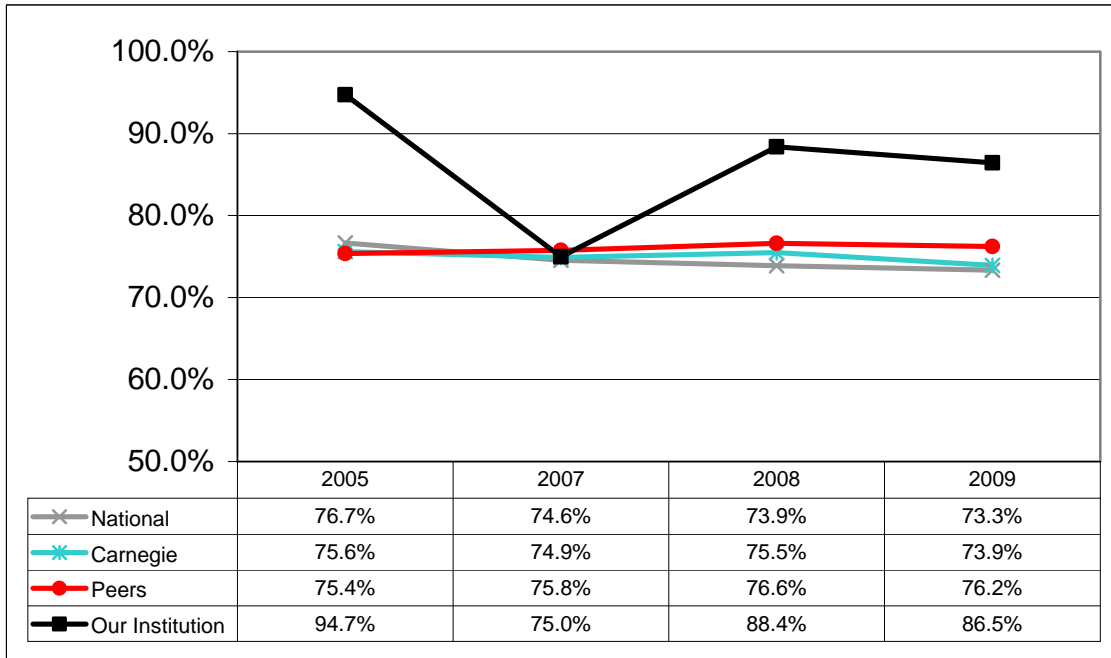
% responding "Exceptional" or "Substantial" progress



Objective 3: Learning to apply course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions)

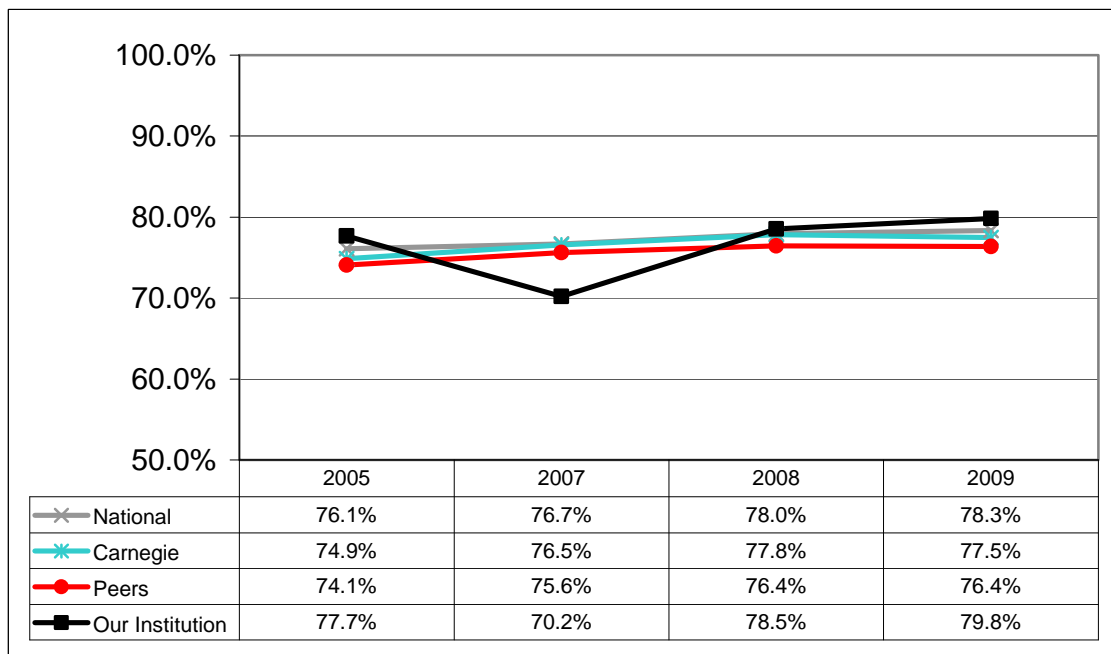
Graph A.5
Faculty Rating of Importance

% of total classes where instructor selected objective as "Essential" or "Important"



Graph A.6
Student Rating of Progress

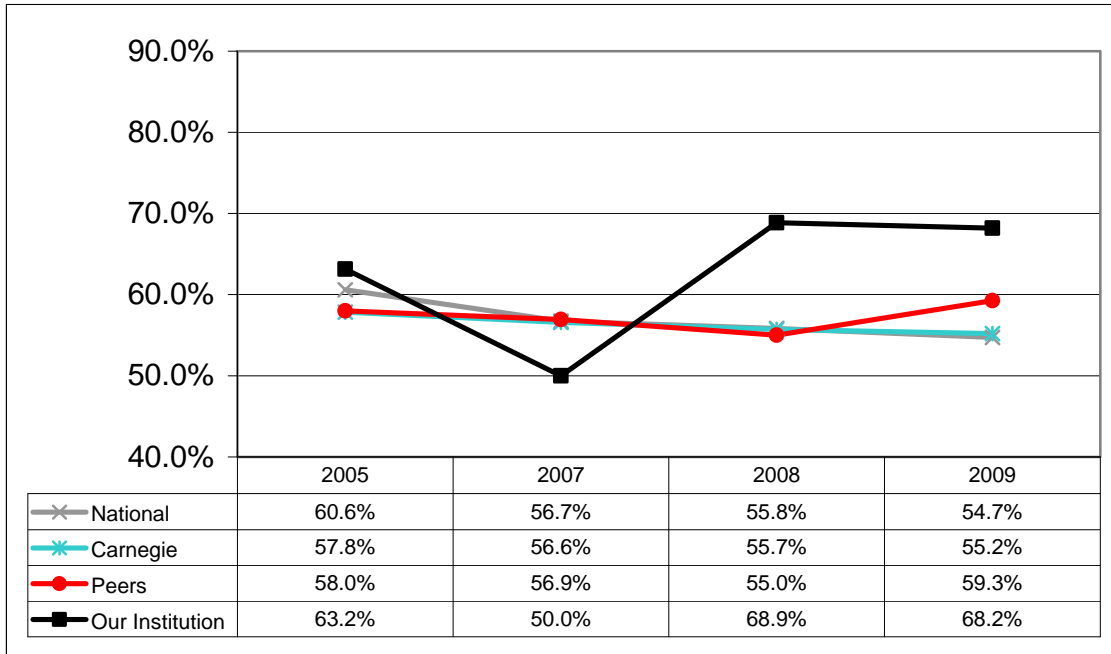
% responding "Exceptional" or "Substantial" progress



Objective 4: Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course

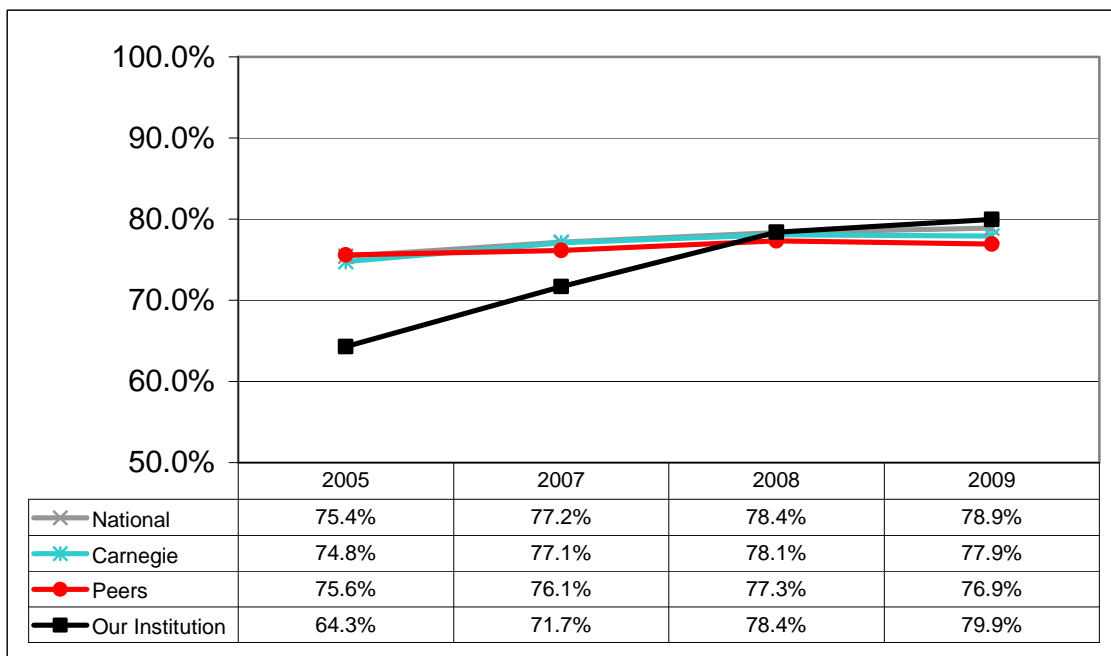
Graph A.7
Faculty Rating of Importance

% of total classes where instructor selected objective as "Essential" or "Important"



Graph A.8
Student Rating of Progress

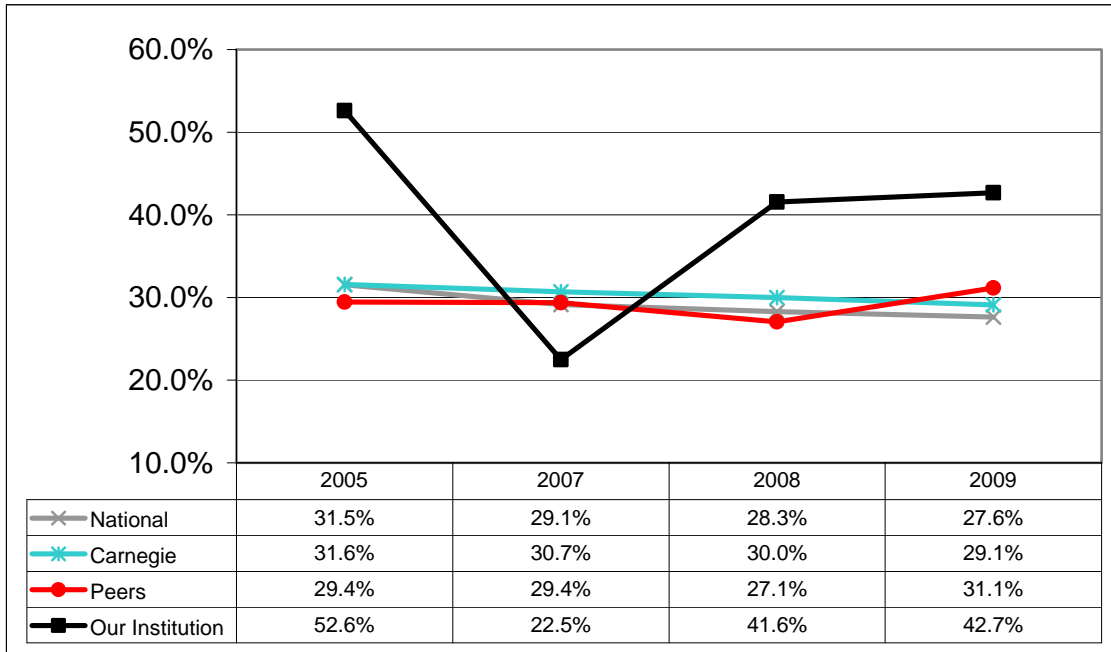
% responding "Exceptional" or "Substantial" progress



Objective 5: Acquiring skills in working with others as a member of a team

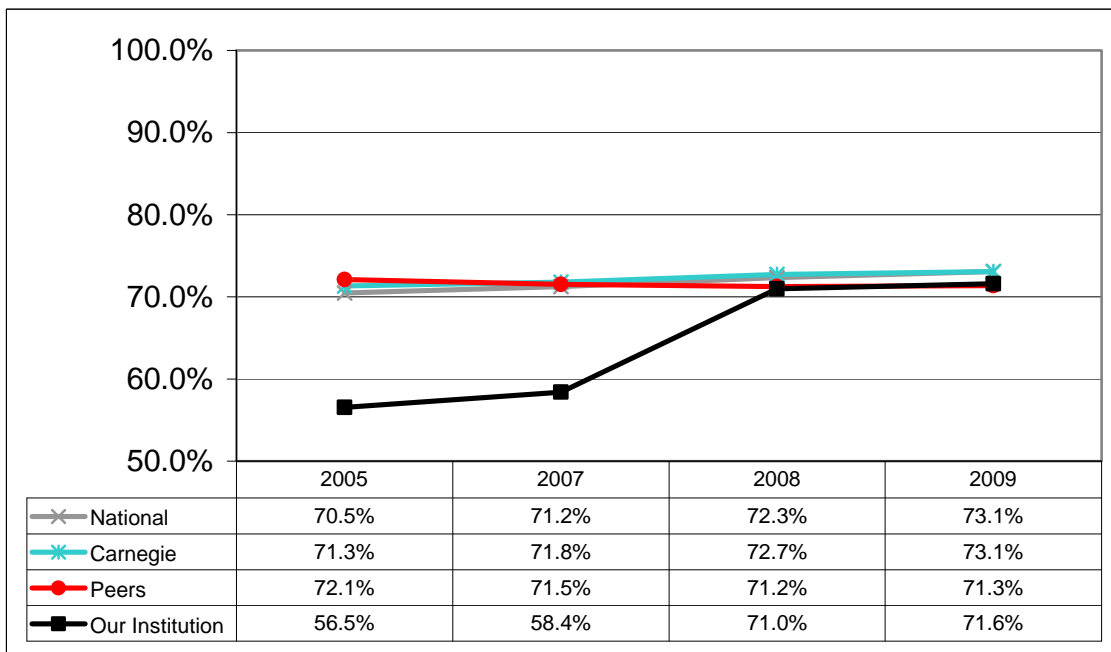
Graph A.9
Faculty Rating of Importance

% of total classes where instructor selected objective as "Essential" or "Important"



Graph A.10
Student Rating of Progress

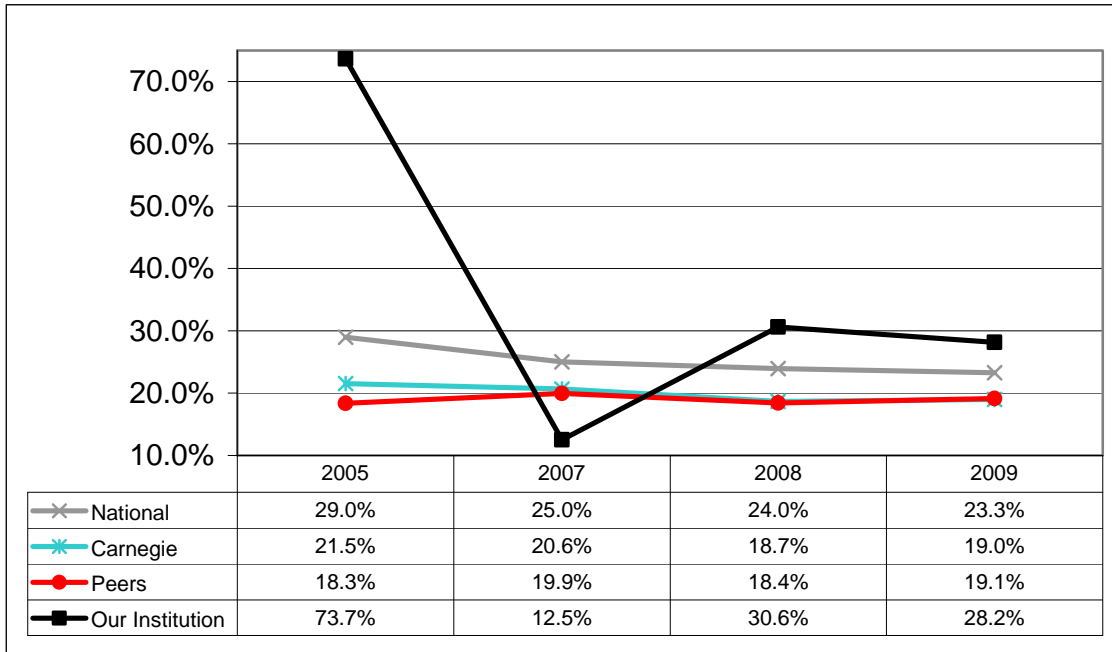
% responding "Exceptional" or "Substantial" progress



Objective 6: Developing creative capacities (writing, inventing, designing, performing in art, music, drama, etc.)

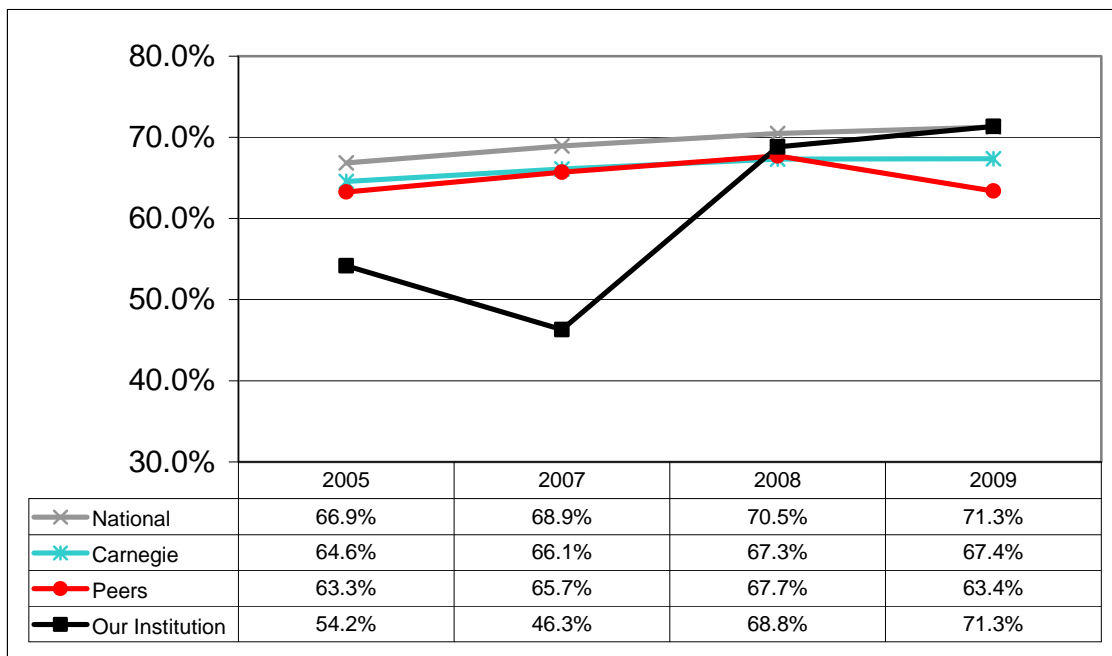
Graph A.11
Faculty Rating of Importance

% of total classes where instructor selected objective as "Essential" or "Important"



Graph A.12
Student Rating of Progress

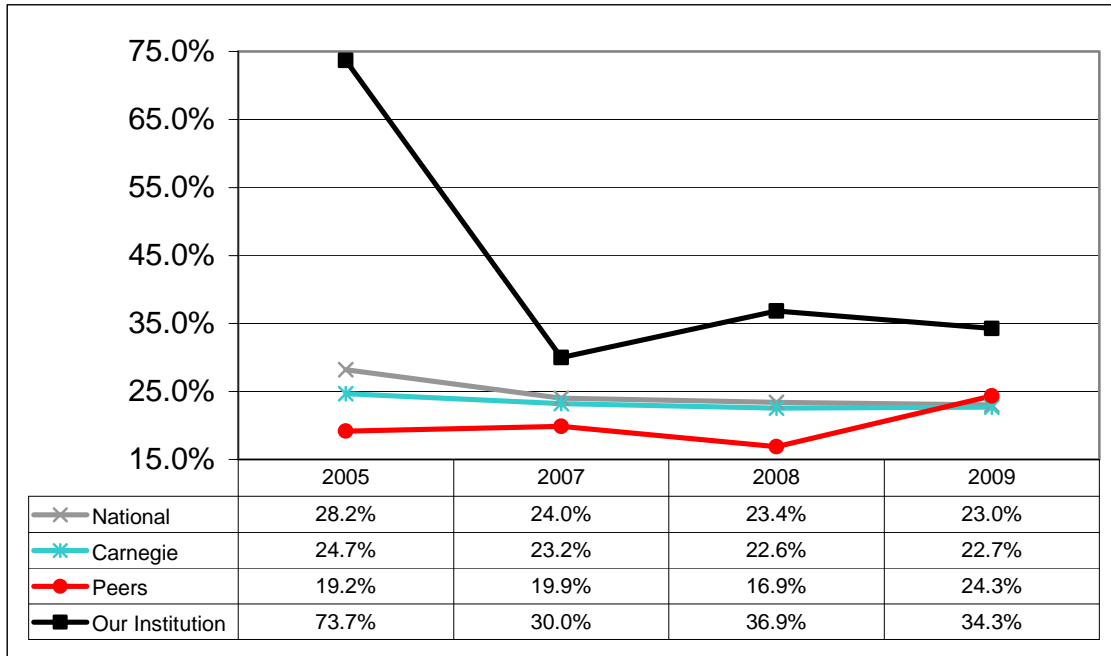
% responding "Exceptional" or "Substantial" Progress



Objective 7: Gaining a broader understanding and appreciation of intellectual/cultural activity (music, science, literature, etc.)

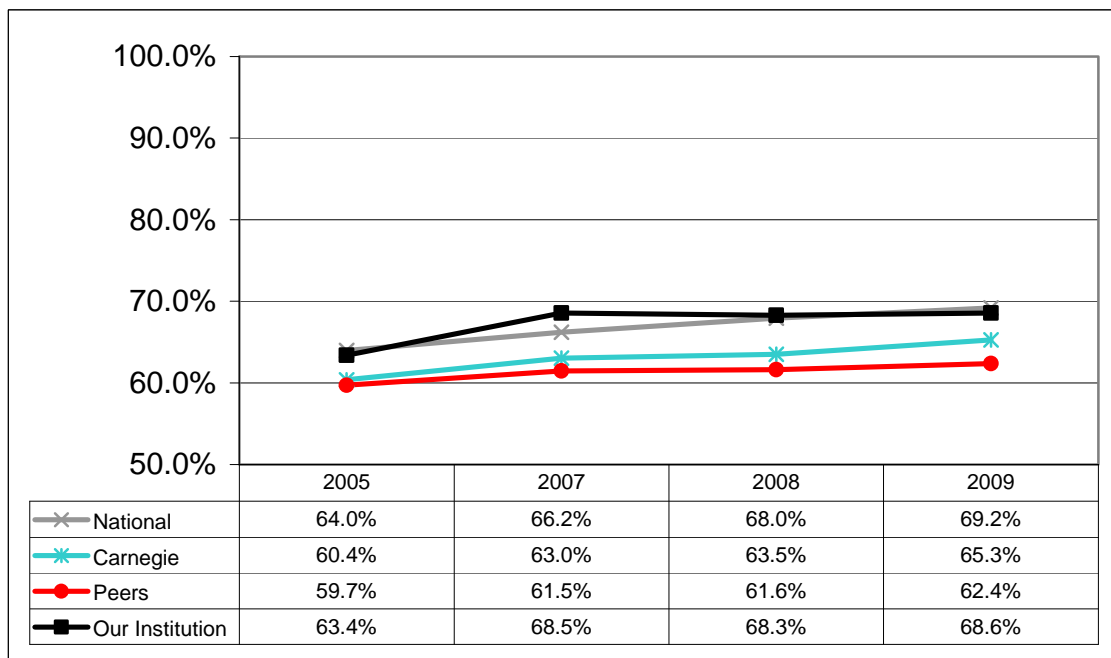
Graph A.13
Faculty Rating of Importance

% of total classes where instructor selected objective as "Essential" or "Important"



Graph A.14
Student Rating of Progress

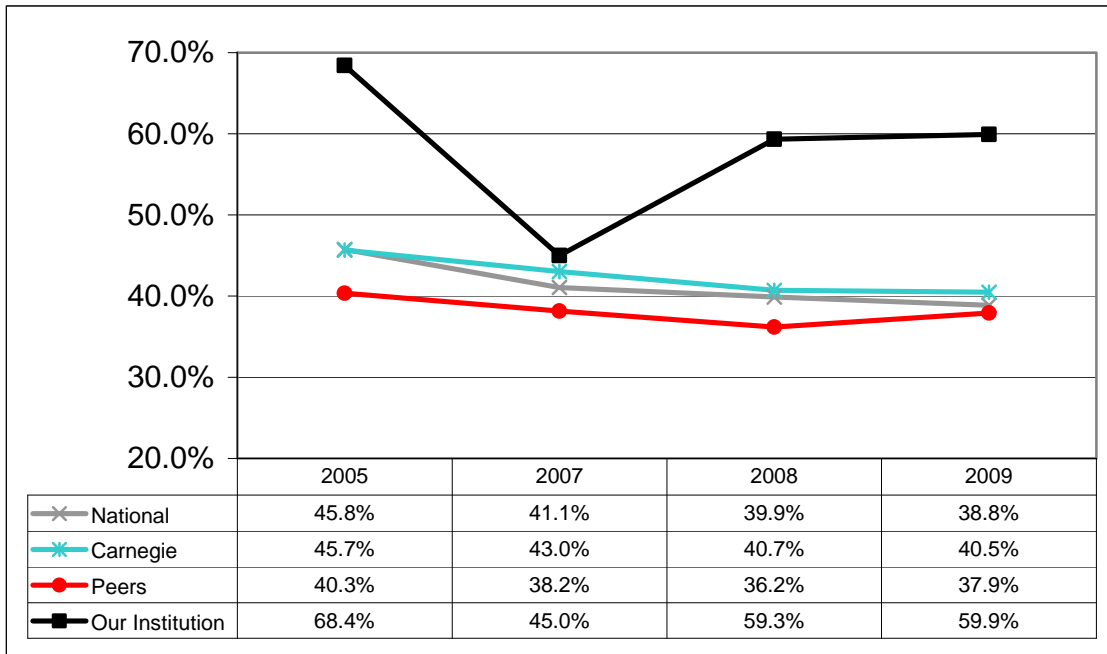
% responding "Exceptional" or "Substantial" Progress



Objective 8: Developing skill in expressing oneself orally or in writing

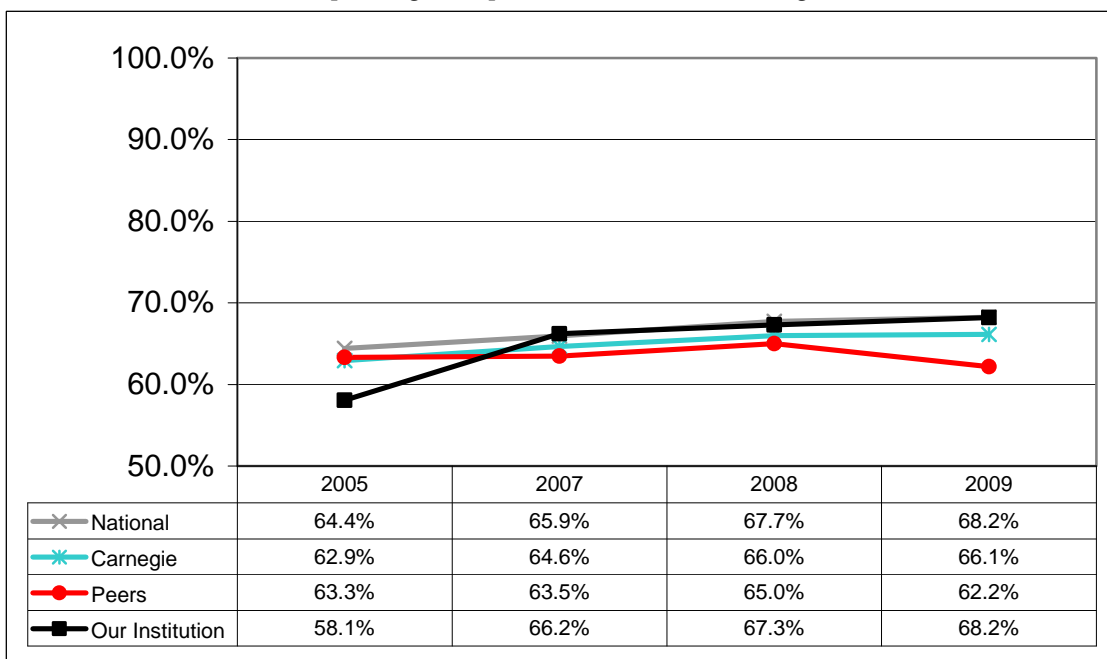
Graph A.15
Faculty Rating of Importance

% of total classes where instructor selected objective as "Essential" or "Important"



Graph A.16
Student Rating of Progress

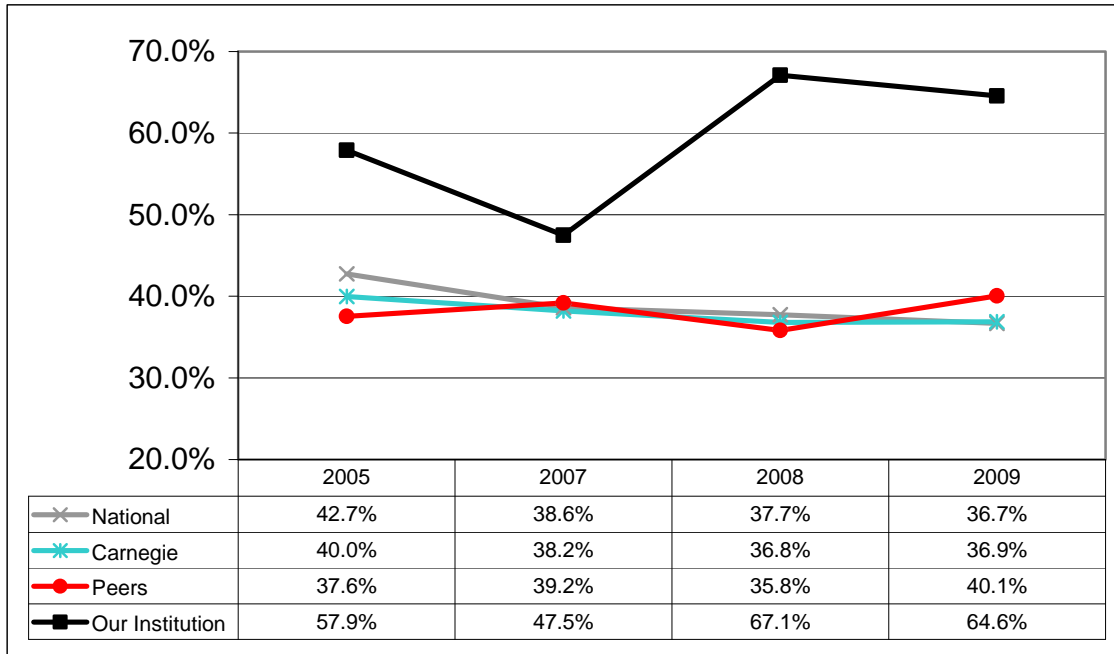
% responding "Exceptional" or "Substantial" Progress



Objective 9: Learning how to find and use resources for answering questions or solving problems

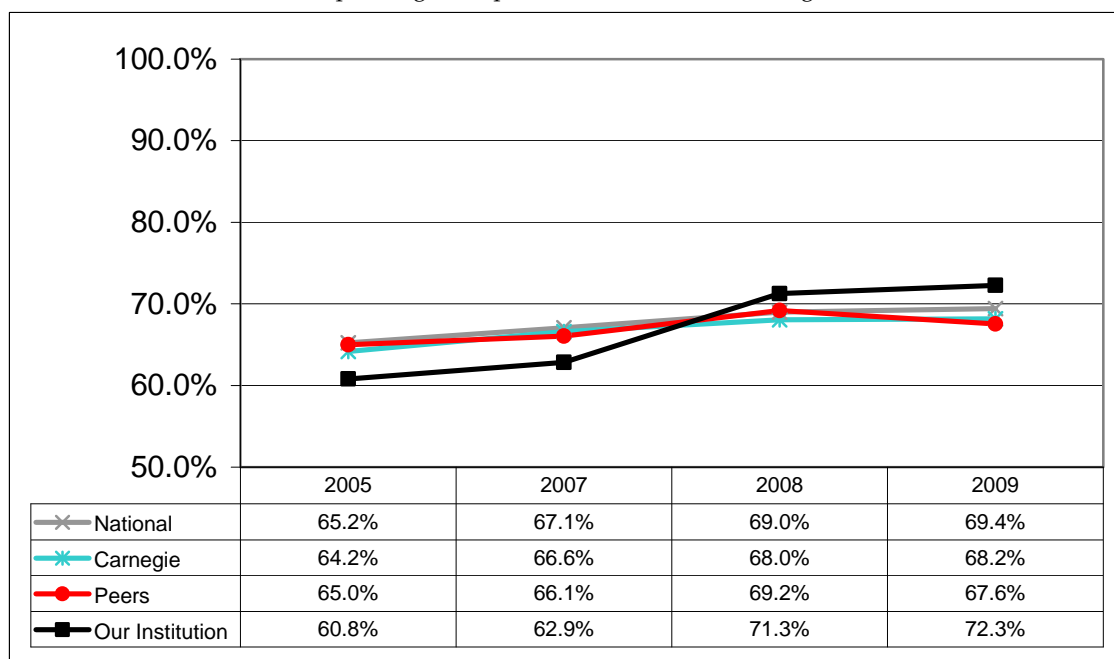
Graph A.17
Faculty Rating of Importance

% of total classes where instructor selected objective as "Essential" or "Important"



Graph A.18
Student Rating of Progress

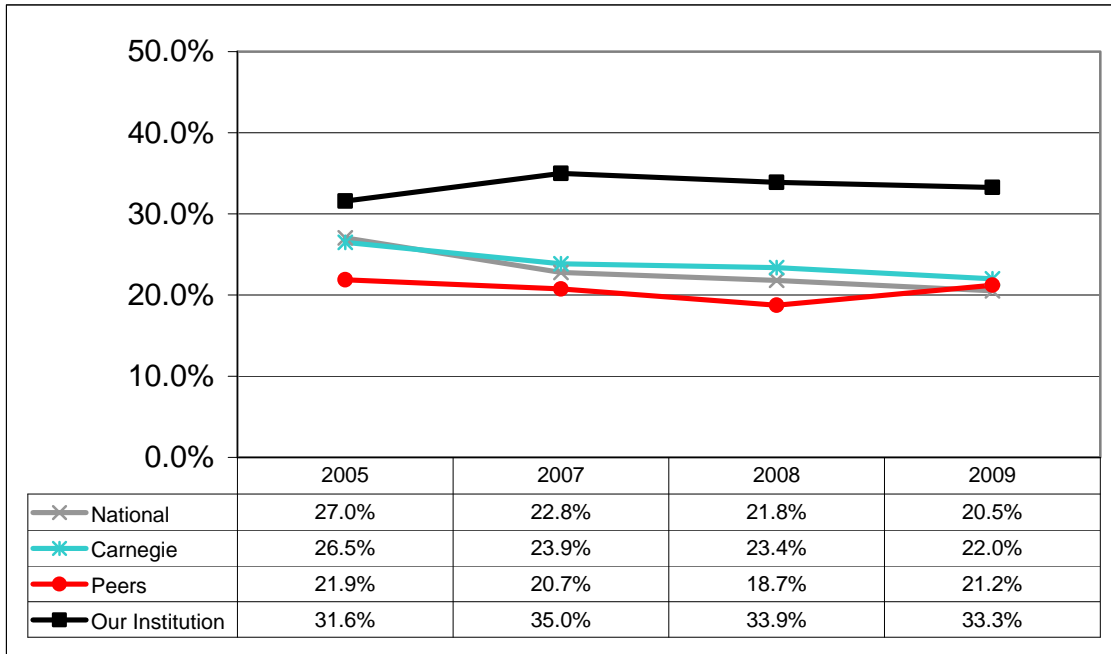
% responding "Exceptional" or "Substantial" Progress



Objective 10: Developing a clearer understanding of, and commitment to, personal values

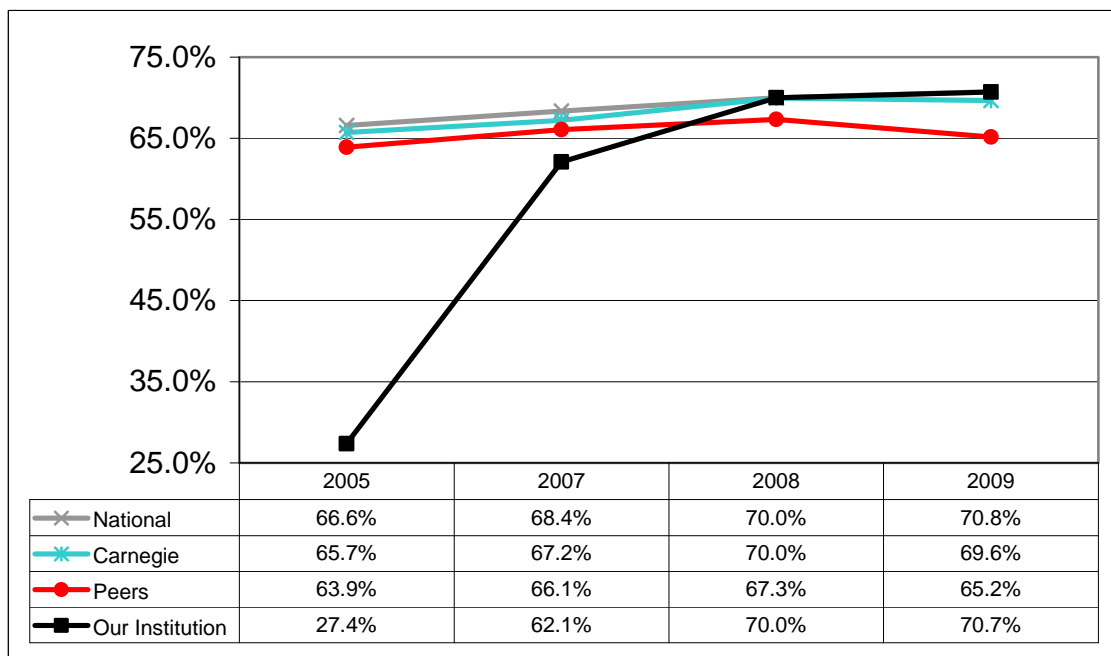
Graph A.19
Faculty Rating of Importance

% of total classes where instructor selected objective as "Essential" or "Important"



Graph A.20
Student Rating of Progress

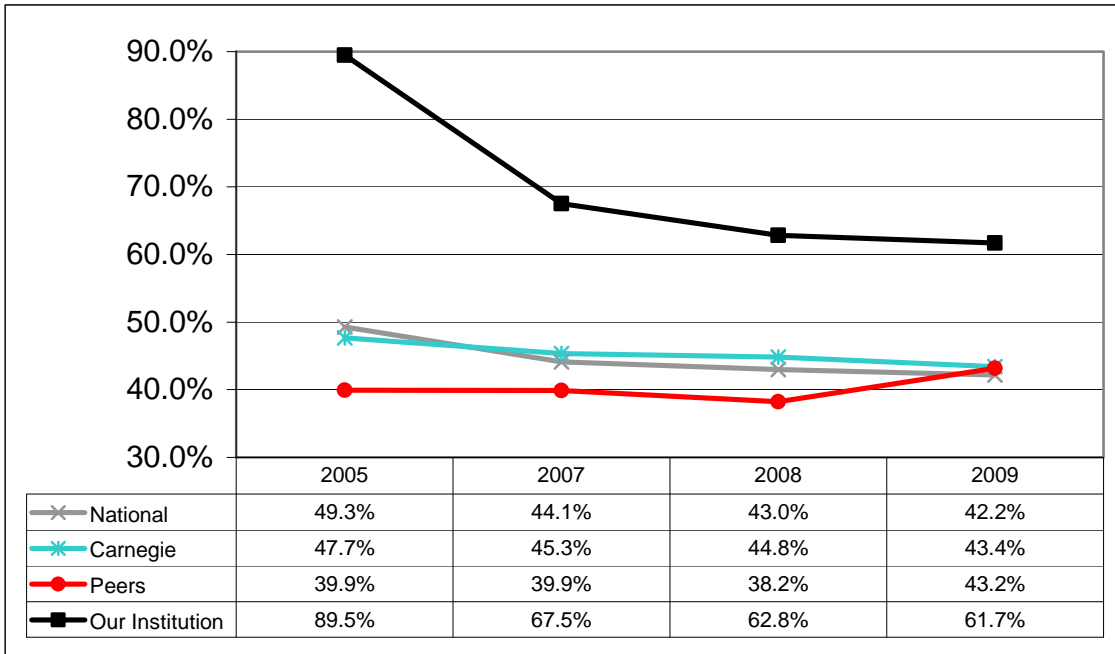
% responding "Exceptional" or "Substantial" Progress



Objective 11: Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view

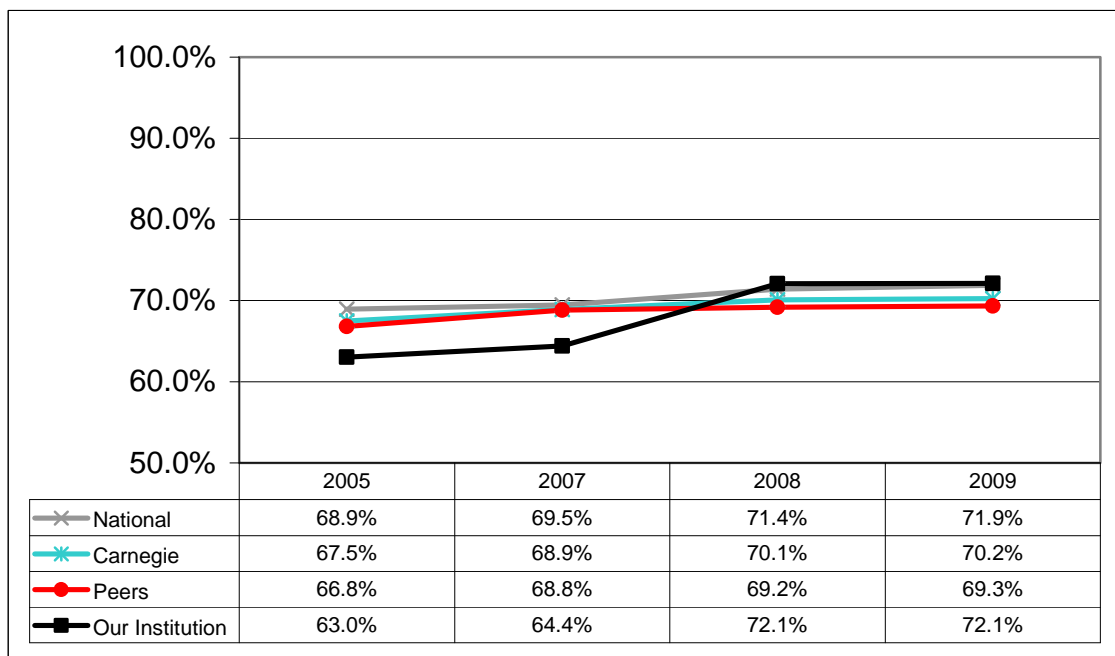
Graph A.21
Faculty Rating of Importance

% of total classes where instructor selected objective as "Essential" or "Important"



Graph A.22
Student Rating of Progress

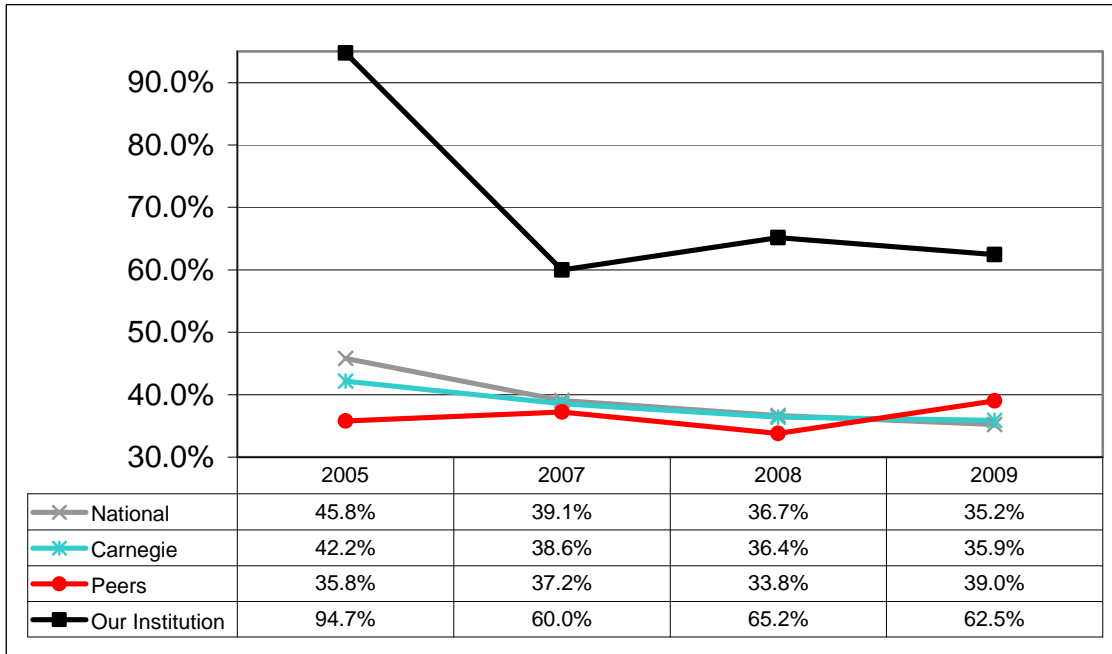
% responding "Exceptional" or "Substantial" Progress



Objective 12: Acquiring an interest in learning more by asking questions and seeking answers

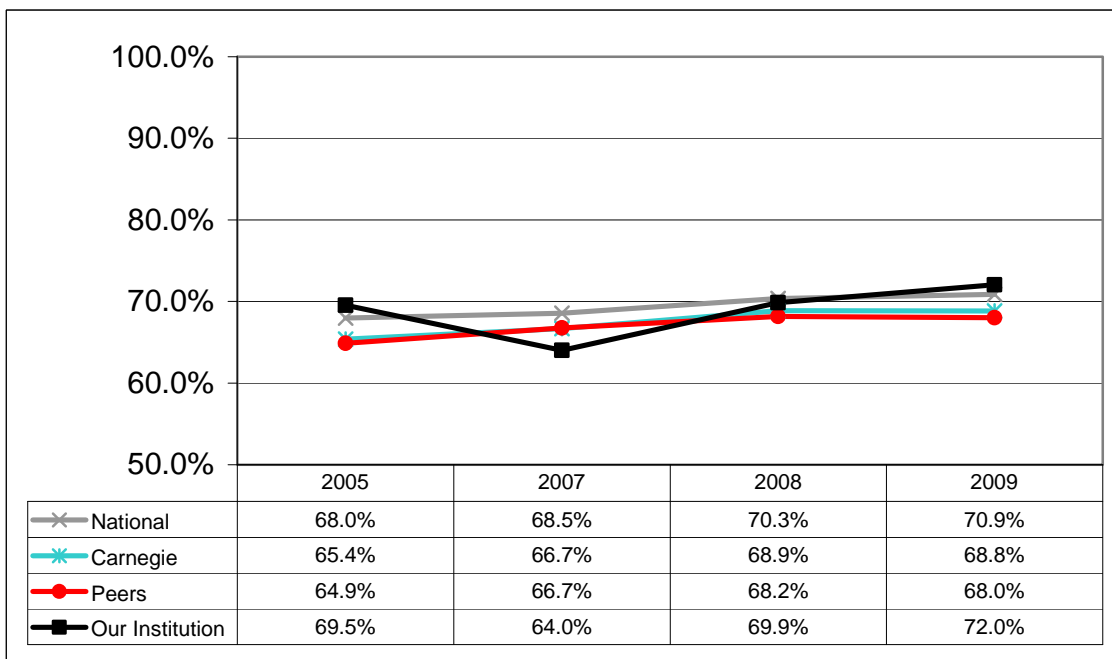
Graph A.23
Faculty Rating of Importance

% of total classes where instructor selected objective as "Essential" or "Important"



Graph A.24
Student Rating of Progress

% responding "Exceptional" or "Substantial" Progress

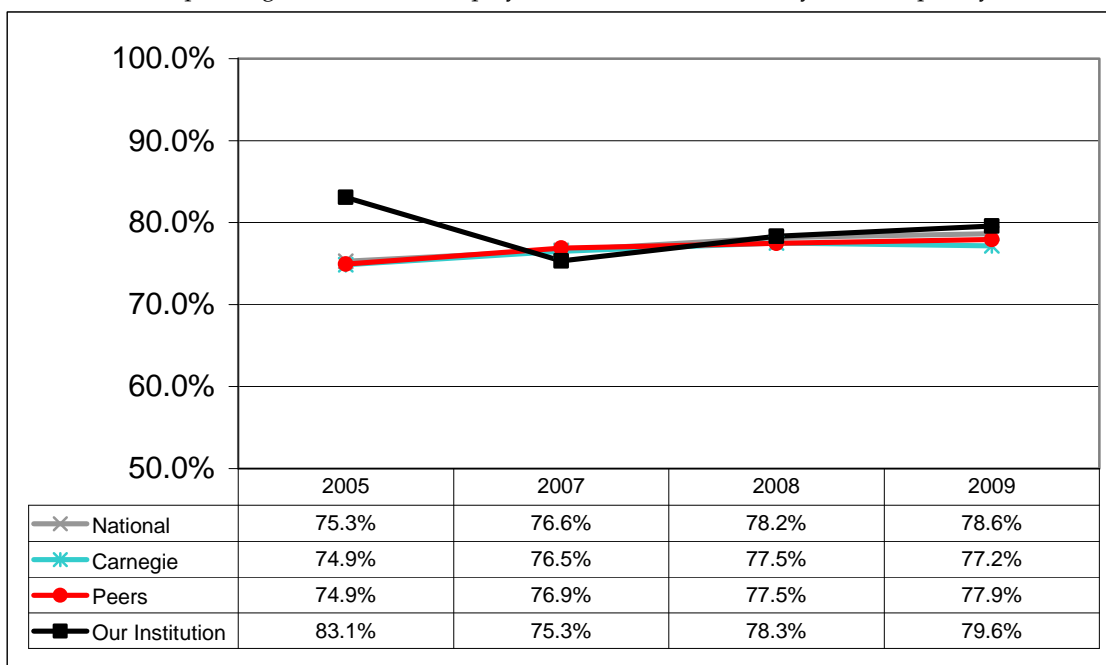


Appendix B: Teaching Methods Emphasis Over Time

- Are our results becoming more or less favorable when compared to our peers or other groups for one or more of the objectives over time?
- Do the results for our institution reflect changes we have made in curricular or teaching initiatives?

Graph B.1
Stimulating Student Interest

% responding that instructor employed methods "Almost Always" or "Frequently"



Teaching Methods and Styles - Stimulating Student Interest

4. Demonstrated the importance and significance of the subject matter

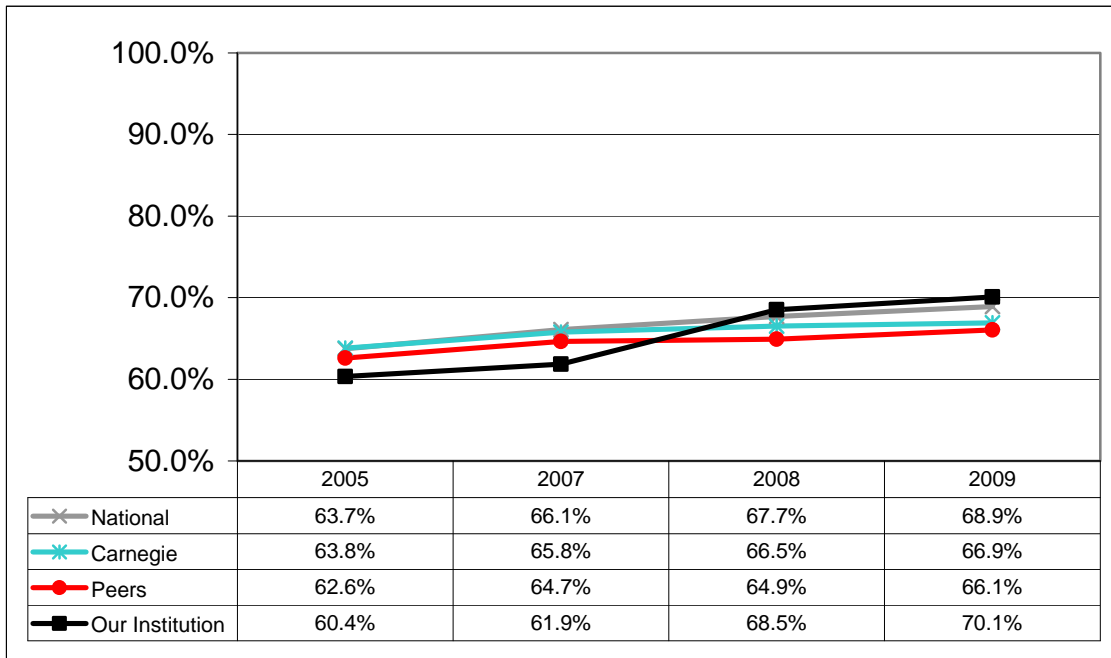
8. Stimulated students to intellectual effort beyond that required by most courses

13. Introduced stimulating ideas about the subject

15. Inspired students to set and achieve goals which really challenged them

Graph B.2 Fostering Student Collaboration

% responding that instructor employed methods "Almost Always" or "Frequently"

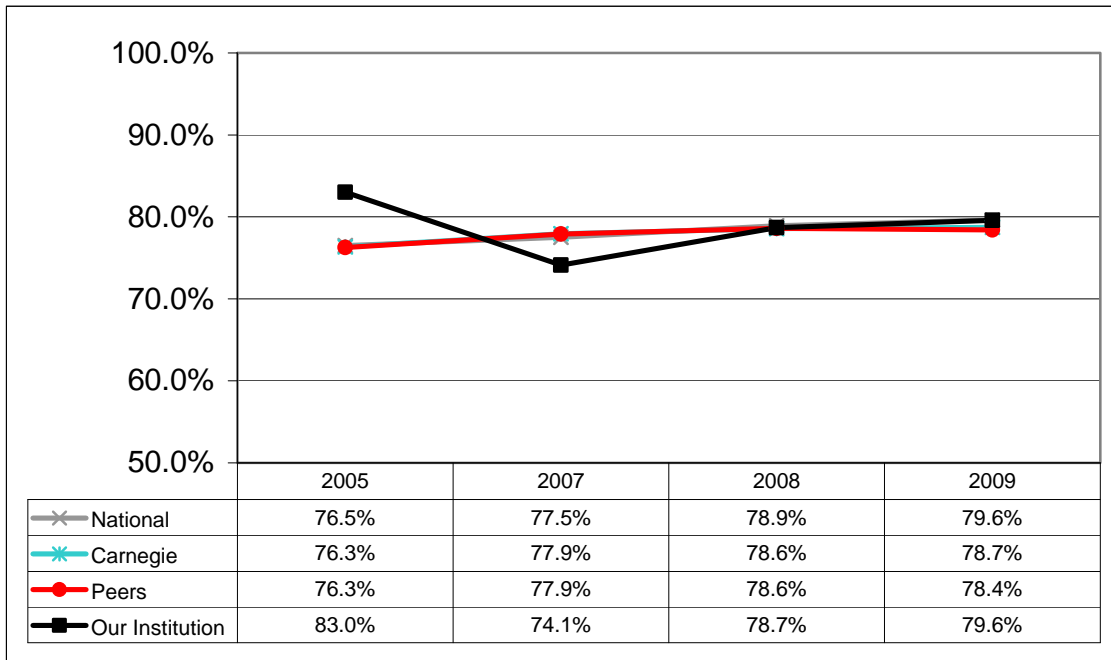


Teaching Methods and Styles - Fostering Student Collaboration

- 5. Formed "teams" or "discussion groups" to facilitate learning
- 16. Asked students to share ideas and experiences with others whose backgrounds and viewpoints differ from their own
- 18. Asked students to help each other understand ideas or concepts

Graph B.3 Establishing Rapport

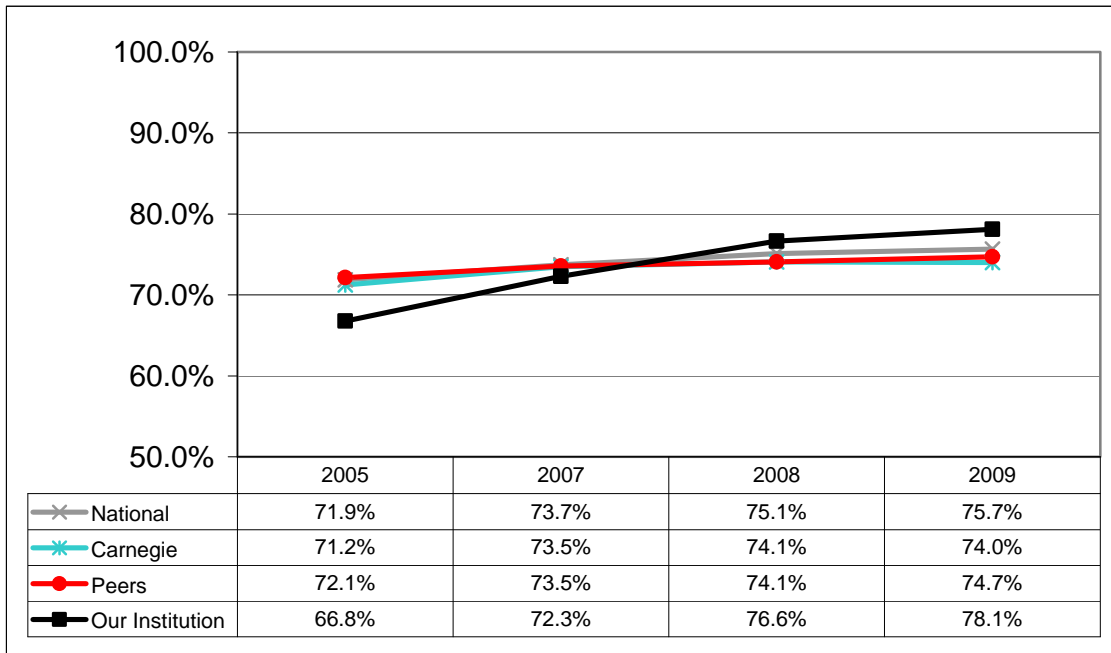
% responding that instructor employed methods "Almost Always" or "Frequently"



Teaching Methods and Styles - Establishing Rapport
1. Displayed a personal interest in students and their learning
2. Found ways to help students answer their own questions
7. Explained the reasons for criticisms of students' academic performance
20. Encouraged student-faculty interaction outside of class (office visits, phone calls, e-mail, etc.)

Graph B.4 Encouraging Student Involvement

% responding that instructor employed methods "Almost Always" or "Frequently"

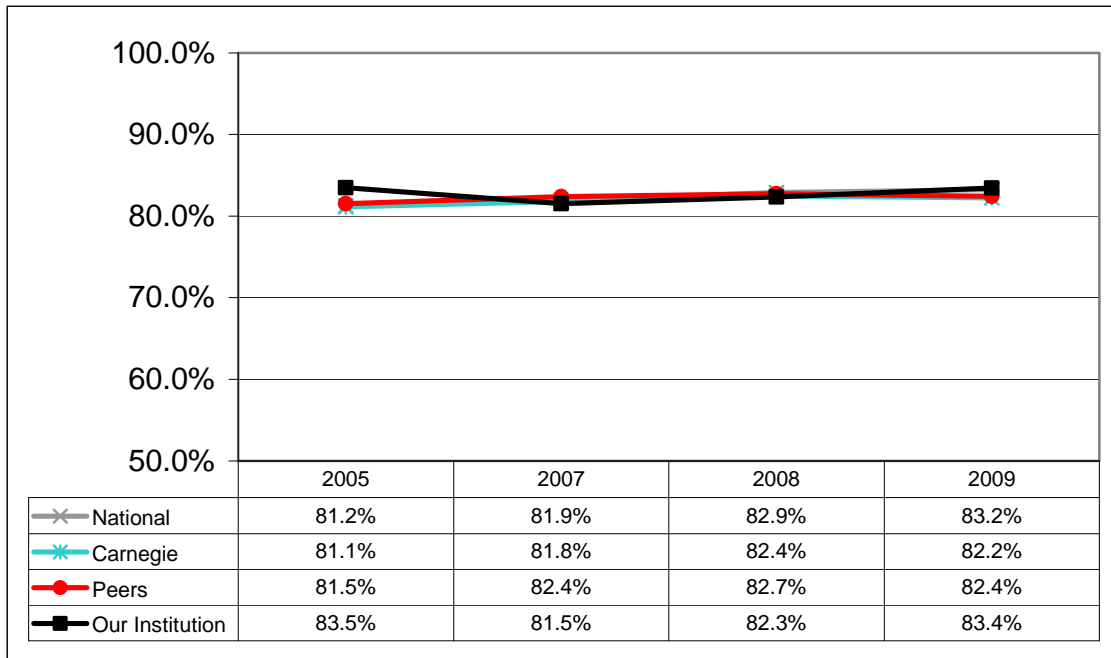


Teaching Methods and Styles - Encouraging Student Involvement

- 9. Encouraged students to use multiple resources (e.g. data banks, library holdings, outside experts) to improve understanding
- 11. Related course material to real life situations
- 14. Involved students in "hands on" projects such as research, case studies, or "real life" activities
- 19. Gave projects, tests, or assignments that required original or creative thinking

Graph B.5 Structuring Classroom Experiences

% responding that instructor employed methods "Almost Always" or "Frequently"



Teaching Methods and Styles - Structuring Classroom Experiences

- 3. Scheduled course work (class activities, tests, projects) in ways which encouraged students to stay up to date in their work
- 6. Made it clear how each topic fit into the course
- 10. Explained course material clearly and concisely
- 12. Gave tests, projects, etc. that covered the most important points of the course
- 17. Provided timely and frequent feedback on tests, reports, projects, etc. to help students improve