The number of students enrolling in Louisiana State University in Shreveport’s online MBA program is increasing — a trend that will continue, experts say.

Louisiana State University in Shreveport was recently ranked fourth in the nation for its online Master of Business Administration program by Affordable Colleges Online. The program was measured on its affordability, guidance, accommodation and academic quality. Tami Knotts, LSUS marketing professor, said more students are enrolling each year because of the program’s convenience, low tuition and academic success.

“Our enrollment has increased significantly,” she said. “I now have students in my courses from all over the U.S. and some from different countries. Technology resources have improved over time with new online learning tools and software, which allow faculty to hold virtual chats and office hours for students. Adapting to educational trends and maintaining technological proficiency is a must for faculty members who teach online.”

The average cost for an MBA program in the U.S. is $50,000, said dean of the College of Business, Education and Human Development Nancy Albers-Miller. LSUS offers the online program for less than $14,000 per year.

“Like any other MBA program, there’s some great benefits to getting an MBA,” she said. “MBA is really the next level for business and non-business majors for decision-making, project management and learning that they might need in their jobs. MBAs tend to provide us with transferable skills.”

The program currently has 1,000 students enrolled, with a combination of new and returning students. The program had 900 students last year, Albers-Miller said. LSUS’s program offers students specializations in finance, human resource management, general business, entrepreneurship and family enterprise.
The program started in 2014 and is accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business — the most prestigious accreditation a business program can have, Knotts said.

“Many of our students are employees, who complete the MBA program while working full-time,” Knotts said. “The accelerated online format can lead to a student finishing his/her degree faster than a traditional 16-week program. The online format also allows for more faculty-student interaction, where students who may not speak up in a traditional classroom setting feel more comfortable interacting with their professor virtually.”

Christopher Mahone, 26, will begin taking his online finance classes in August. He attended LSUS for his undergraduate degree years prior, he said.

“I looked at other schools like Louisiana Tech, but I’ve been to LSUS and know the teachers,” he said. “I like the fact that it’s an accelerated program so I can finish even faster and I like the environment.”

Mahone is a huge fan of online courses. He’s decided to go part-time since he’ll start his new job at Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation this fall.

“It’s more self-paced, so if I need to do more reading then I can do it on my own time and not have to worry about catching up with the instructor at that exact moment,” he said. “I prefer online than traditional.”