Online programs shine in nation, state with U.S. News & World Report's 2024 ‘best of’ list

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The University of Louisiana at Lafayette’s inclusion in U.S. News & World Report’s national Best Online Programs rankings placed a range of UL Lafayette Online programs among the nation’s best.

The rankings also underscore the status of several programs as tops in Louisiana, highlighted by UL Lafayette’s No. 57 national ranking in the Best Online Bachelor's Program category. That ranking means UL Lafayette is the state’s highest-ranked university in that category for the eighth straight year.

Other categories for which U.S. News’ national rankings make UL Lafayette Online programs best in the state for 2024 – along with the ranking of each – are: Best Online Master’s in Nursing Program (No. 20); Best Online Business Master’s, non-MBA (No. 38); Best Online Bachelor’s Program for Veterans (No. 42); and Best Online

Bachelor's in Business Program (No. 75).

U.S. News also ranked the University for: Best Online MBA Programs for Veterans (No. 75); Best Online MBA Program (No. 112); and Best Online Master's in Education Program (No. 127).

U.S. News evaluated schools based on a variety of factors, such as student engagement, faculty credentials, and services and technologies, according to a press release.

Dr. Jaimie Hebert, provost and vice president for Academic Affairs, said the rankings reflect the University's dedication to student success.

"For us, these rankings speak to more than the quality of UL Lafayette's online degree opportunities; they speak to an exceptional student experience," he explained.

"As an R1 institution, we know our University is in the top-tier of academic rigor and research. But more than that, we're committed to providing access and support for students to succeed across pathways," Hebert added.

Since 2010, UL Lafayette has expanded its online opportunities to include six online bachelor's degree programs, 10 graduate degree programs, and five graduate certificate programs.

Dr. Claire Arabie, director of UL Lafayette Online, said the University's priority in offering online degree programs has also been to provide support services for those students who cannot access on-campus opportunities.

Arabie oversees the University's online student support team, which she said serves as online students' bridge to campus, helping with everything from applying and registering to adapting to online coursework.

"Online students have unique needs, and our team is trained to anticipate and respond to those challenges as students work to complete their degrees while working full time and, often, while raising families," Arabie said.

"Many of our online students are returning to complete their bachelor's degree or earn a graduate degree after being out of school for several years – sometimes decades. We want to create a smooth transition so they're able to achieve their academic and professional goals," she added.

Serving students on campus and across the country presents unique challenges and opportunities, said Dr. Mary Farmer-Kaiser, dean of the Graduate School. As her office develops programming to engage graduate students, she said her team looks for opportunities to connect online students with others across the graduate education community.

"Whether students are online or on campus, they're part of a global community of UL Lafayette scholars, making real and lasting change," Farmer-Kaiser said. "Fostering those connections is critical as the relationships graduate students build with their professors and with each other open the door for long-term partnerships and opportunities for growth and innovation."

To learn more about the University's online degree programs and resources for online students, visit louisiana.edu/online.

Photo caption: U.S. News & World Report's 2024 Best Online Programs Rankings give high marks to UL Lafayette for a range of programs. **(Photo credit:** Rachel Rafati / University of Louisiana at Lafayette)

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