JENNIFER ANN MORROW: My name is Dr. Jennifer Ann Morrow, and I'm an assistant professor at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia. I have a bachelor's degree in general psychology, which I received from the University of Rhode Island, and a master's degree in general psychology, which I received from Rhode Island College. And I have my PhD in experimental psychology, also from the University of Rhode Island, where I specialized in research methodology and program evaluation. A lot of the research that I am doing currently is looking at effective pedagogies in how to teach statistics. And so I look at the effectiveness of various teaching methods and how that impacts students' anxiety towards statistics and their usefulness of using statistics in psychological research. Most of what I teach is statistics and research methods, both at the undergrad level as well as at the graduate level. So I teach undergraduate research methods. I teach a graduate statistics and research methods course. And I'm also teaching social psychology, program evaluation, and health psychology courses. My teaching philosophy around statistics and research methods is to teach it from a conceptual and applied approach. Formulas are not enough. I need to make sure students understand why you're using statistics and how you're using statistics and why it's so important to understand them.

What Can You Expect in This Course

JENNIFER ANN MORROW: Over the next few weeks, you'll be exposed to various methods of using statistics, from the basic descriptive statistics to a univariate statistics, such as analysis of variants, independent T tests, and dependent T tests. Most weeks, you'll see me doing a demonstration of a particular statistic from the beginning to the end and understanding how to interpret it and use it in your own research area. As researchers, we have to digest lots of information in journal articles and newspapers where people are using statistics, and if we don't understand how they're used, we can't critique whether or not they're used properly. One advantage of this course is, I'll be using practical examples throughout the semester. We're going to be using one data set for all of the analyses, and these hopefully will have real-world data that you can see why
statistics is used and understand it in a more detailed fashion. I would say that most students feel a bit anxious when they're taking a statistics course, and a lot of research shows that even almost up to 80% of graduate students feel some type of statistics anxiety. And what statistics anxiety is is that apprehension that, "Oh, my God, I have to take a statistics course," or, "How do I understand this information in order to get through to my degree?" And so it's very, very common. And there's a lot of reasons for it. One of the main reasons is, a lot of students feel a fear of failure that they're going into this class, and they're going to not do well, and they're not going to be able to get their degree because they're very math-phobic. And I would say nine times out of ten, students come up to me and say, "Dr. Morrow, I'm so math-phobic. I can't do math." Statistics is not just about math. It's how to use that math in order to understand the research that's around you.

**Tips for Managing Statistics Anxiety**

JENNIFER ANN MORROW: Statistics anxiety can have a profound impact on students' performance in a statistics course. Research shows that students that just dive into a statistics course, that have a lot of anxiety and then don't deal with it, don't find ways to combat this anxiety and to try to perform better are not going to do well in the course. So there's many things that you, as a student, can do in order to alleviate that anxiety and for you to perform well in that course. One of the things that I always suggest to my students is to find a stats buddy. Couple up with somebody else in the classroom. One suggestion I can give to you in order to help you relieve some of the statistics anxiety and to do better in this course is to form online chats with some of your classmates. Share your work. Email your homework. Have them review your homework, and you review theirs. Go into the chat rooms and talk about what things you're clear and not clear on in regards to what you're learning in your course. You're going to become much more confident if you have someone look at your work and give you that extra feedback that, yes, you're on the right track, or also give you suggestions for where you are doing poorly so you can study a little bit more in that area. It is so important to ask for help if you're not doing well. Contact the faculty member if you're struggling in any particular area. And a suggestion that I have for all students is to keep a weekly log of what you're clear and not clear on in terms of statistics. Write down what you understand and what you don't understand. And if there's something that you don't
understand, email the professor and ask him or her to explain it in more detail. There is also the main Walden University website where you can get a lot of information on how to find tutors and other additional resources to help you out throughout this course. Students always ask me, "Why is it important to understand statistics? "Why do I have to take this course? "I want to be a clinician. I'm never going to use statistics again." And I tell them, "You need to understand research." You should be able to go in and read a journal article and look at the results section. So many of my students, when I ask them, they skip right to the discussion, and they just take face-value what the author said: "Yes, I found a gender difference here," or "Yes, these two things are related." If you understand statistics, you can be critical of that results section and really understand, "Did they use those statistics right? "Did they actually find what they were supposed to? And are these conclusions valid?" So if a medical journal comes out with research that says this little pill is going to make you lose 100 pounds, you can be critical of that research. My best advice to you as a student in order to do well in this class is to walk in with an open mind and to alleviate your fear to understand that you will learn statistics. You'll be able to understand from beginning to end how to conduct statistics in your area of research. And hopefully by the end of this semester, you'll feel as excited about statistics as I do.