

# Lab Assignment: Detect Loop in a Linked List

## Objective

Implement a function in C to detect whether a given singly linked list contains a cycle (loop) using the Floyd's Cycle-Finding algorithm (also known as the Tortoise and Hare algorithm).

## Problem Statement

Given the head of a singly linked list, determine if there exists a loop in the list. Return 1 (or true) if a loop exists, otherwise return 0 (or false). Use  $O(n)$  time complexity and  $O(1)$  auxiliary space.

## Function Signature

```
int detectLoop(struct Node* head);
```

## Approach (Floyd's Algorithm)

- Initialize two pointers, **slow** and **fast**, both pointing to **head**.
- Move **slow** by one node and **fast** by two nodes in each iteration.
- If at any point **slow == fast**, a loop exists—return 1.
- Continue until **fast** or **fast->next** becomes NULL, indicating no loop—return 0.

## Example Cases

- **Loop Present:** Input: 1 -> 2 -> 3 -> 4 -> 5 -> 2 (loop back) Output: 1 (true)
- **No Loop:** Input: 10 -> 20 -> 30 -> 40 -> 50 Output: 0 (false)