

# DECODING YOUR ASSIGNMENTS

## THE ONE ABOUT PURPOSE

### Purpose

- What skills will I be learning or practicing?
- What skills from this assignment could I potentially use in my future career?
- In what ways could this assignment help me feel more prepared for the next exam?
- What is the connection between this assignment and what we are learning in class?

**“Why am I doing this assignment?”**

### Sometimes it might not seem clear

- “I struggle with assignments when the course isn’t within my major. One assignment involved making flash cards for terms that I will never use again. Thinking back on it, it did help me prepare for the exam and feel comfortable with the material. And I was able to learn a new study strategy for my other courses.”
- “I had a project that tested our knowledge on diagnosing individuals, but we didn’t realize it at first. It seemed unclear what we were doing, but in the end we actively applied our understanding of the material.”

### But there is a purpose

### Tips from fellow students

- Look at the whole semester to see if there are multiple assignments that are similar and how they all fit in
- Evaluate previous assignment purposes and check if they are similar
- Look back at the syllabus and read the course outcomes to see how the assignment connects

### Drop-In Hours

Visiting drop-in hours, also known as office hours, will allow you to talk through the assignment with your instructor to discuss the purpose. Here are some resources:

**Tutor Iowa Academic Tips Worksheet**  
How to Navigate Drop-In Hours



**Linked-In Learning Role Play**  
Practice the conversation before you go

