

Critical Reflection

My Applied Studies program has given me the opportunity to connect academic theory with real-world application. Through research essays, collaborative projects, and professional writing assignments, I developed skills that are not only academically valuable but also highly relevant to today's workplace. Each project in this portfolio highlights how I applied critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving to complex challenges.

Project 1: Social Issue Research Essay – Sustainable Consumerism

This research essay explored whether biodegradable alternatives can truly replace PLA and petroleum-based plastics. The project required evaluating economic, environmental, and supply chain challenges while also proposing innovative solutions.

Skills Developed:

- Research & Analysis: synthesizing peer-reviewed sources and industry data
- Critical Thinking: weighing trade-offs between sustainability and feasibility
- Professional Writing: presenting complex findings clearly for diverse audiences

Project 2: Interview Summary – Career Pathways in Sustainability

In this project, I interviewed a professional working in sustainability and analyzed how their formal education shaped their career success. This allowed me to connect classroom learning with industry practice.

Skills Developed:

- Interviewing & Communication: crafting effective questions and engaging with a professional
- Analytical Writing: drawing connections between education and workplace skills
- Networking: applying professional etiquette to build career-related connections

Project 3: Group Strategic Plan Presentation – Eco-Friendly Product Launch

This group project focused on designing a strategic launch plan for a biodegradable product. Working as part of a team, I contributed to research, planning, and presenting a cohesive strategy.

Skills Developed:

- Collaboration: coordinating tasks and deadlines in a team setting
- Project Management: delegating roles and ensuring deliverables met quality standards
- Presentation Skills: delivering an engaging, professional presentation

These projects represent more than individual assignments — they demonstrate the practical skills I have gained through the Applied Studies program. I am now confident in my ability to research complex issues, communicate effectively, and collaborate on projects that bridge education with real-world innovation.