

Allison Cruikshank

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Overview

I am a fifth-year PhD candidate in Mathematics at Duke University, where I develop mechanistic mathematical models to represent human physiological processes and address questions in medicine. I plan to pursue a career in the pharmaceutical or biotech industry after completing my PhD in May 2026, with a particular interest in applying QSP to drug development.

Education

Duke University

Expected May 2026

PhD in Mathematics, Advisor: *Professor Michael C. Reed*

Thesis: *Mechanistic Mathematical Models of Sex Differences and Oxidative Stress in Health and Disease*

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

May 2021

BS in Mathematics and Biochemistry with Highest Distinction

Thesis: *A Mathematical Model of Pancreatic Cancer Growth and Response to Treatment*

Advisor: *Professor Huijing Du*

Professional Experience

PhD Researcher, Duke University

Present

- Developed mechanistic models of hepatic oxidative stress management to study sex differences and the effects of estradiol supplementation in pre- and post-menopausal women.
- Incorporated and parameterized estradiol effects on glutathione metabolism to uncover mechanisms of sex-dependent differences in acetaminophen toxicity.
- Investigated the interaction of serotonin and dopamine in Parkinson's Disease and the impact of Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors.
- Constructed models of neurotransmitter co-modulation in the brain to characterize dynamics of neurotransmitter interactions.

Mathematical Modeling Consultant, Zyphore Therapeutics

Present

- Designed and calibrated mechanistic models of metabolic processes to support drug discovery strategy.
- Delivered modeling insights in regular reports to align computational and experimental objectives.

FDA QSP Research Fellow

Present

- Developed QSP models of the Alternative Complement Pathway to simulate drug mechanisms in Paroxysmal Nocturnal Hemoglobinuria (PNH).
- Calibrated models to accurately predict biomarker outcomes in Phase 3 clinical trials of multiple complement pathway inhibitors.
- Analyzed Phase 3 trial data and integrated it with literature to improve model predictive performance.
- Applied global sensitivity analysis to identify pathway drivers of biomarker outcomes.

Simulations Plus QSP Modeling Intern

Summer 2024

- Integrated the downstream effects of Nivolumab on the adaptive immune system and its impact on liver toxicity within BIOLOGXsym, a QST software designed for large molecule liver safety.
- Generated and analyzed virtual patient populations to evaluate how T cell variability influences different mechanisms of Nivolumab-related liver toxicity.

- Parameterized drug-induced liver toxicity mechanisms using LAMPs organ-on-a-chip experimental data to support translational safety modeling.
- Collaborated with cross-functional platform development teams to expand BIOLOGXsym’s predictive capabilities for biologics safety assessment.

Johnson & Johnson Clinical Pharmacology and Pharmacometrics Intern

Summer 2023

- Incorporated and parameterized novel mechanisms of immunological synapse formation into a mechanistic model of T cell redirectors for lymphoma treatment.
- Integrated additional hypothesized mechanisms of co-stimulation into the model framework to explore potential combination strategies.
- Parameterized other mechanistic processes influencing T cell redirector activity using preclinical datasets to improve predictive accuracy.
- Presented modeling progress in project team meetings to cross-functional collaborators.

Publications

- [2025] **Allison Cruikshank**, Michael C. Reed, H. Frederick Nijhout. A Mathematical Model of Oxidative Stress: Sex Differences and Cystathionine β -Synthase Deficiency. Under Review at Mathematical Biosciences.
- [2025] Michael C. Reed, Ayako Suzuki, **Allison Cruikshank**, Mizuki Suzuki, H. Frederick Nijhout. Differential effects of synthetic estrogen on serum homocysteine levels before and after menopause. Under Review at PLOS One.
- [2025] Mizuki Suzuki, Hwi Young Kim, Michael C Reed, Frederik Nijhout, **Allison Cruikshank**, et al. Elevated Homocysteine is Associated with Liver Fibrosis in MASLD in a Sex- and Menopause-Specific Manner. *Gastro Hep Advances*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gastha.2025.100800>.
- [2024] Sergio Mena, **Allison Cruikshank**, Janet Best, H. Frederick Nijhout, Michael C. Reed, Parastoo Hashemi. Modulation of Serotonin Transporter Expression by Escitalopram under Inflammation; Implications for SSRI Effectiveness. *Communications Biology*. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s42003-024-06240-3>.
- [2024] **Allison Cruikshank**, Michael C. Reed, H. Frederick Nijhout. Sex differences in glutathione metabolism and acetaminophen toxicity. *Metabolism and Target Organ Damage*. <https://doi.org/10.20517/mtod.2023.44>.
- [2024] Anna Marie Buchanan, Sergio Mena, Iman Choukari, Aditya Vasa, Jesseca N. Crawford, Jim Fadel, Nick Maxwell, Lawrence Reagan, **Allison Cruikshank**, Janet Best, H. Frederick Nijhout, Michael Reed, Parastoo Hashemi. Serotonin as a Biomarker of Toxin-Induced Parkinsonian. *Molecular Medicine*. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s10020-023-00773-9>.
- [2023] **Allison Cruikshank**, Janet Best, H. Frederick Nijhout, Michael C. Reed. Dynamical Questions in Volume Transmission. *Journal of Biological Dynamics*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17513758.2023.2269986>.
- [2023] Archer Harrold, **Allison Cruikshank**, Bryan Penas, Rebecca Roston. Introducing High School Biology Students to Biochemistry with a Short, Content-Oriented Intervention. *Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bmb.21782>.

Awards

Best Collaborative Project at ISoP QSP SIG Student Symposium

Summer 2025

Top 5 Data Science Project in Erdős Data Science Bootcamp

Fall 2024

Project: [Thrive or Survive: Predicting the Health of Trees following Forest Fires in Washington](#)

AWM Poster Award at SIAM Annual Meeting (Honorable Mention)

Summer 2024 (Summer 2025)

SIAM Student Chapter Certificate of Recognition

2024

NSF RTG Research Assistantship *Duke Applied Math RTG* (\$42,000)

Spring 2023, 2024, 2025

Select Presentations

SIAM Annual Meeting - Oral and Poster Presentation	Summer 2025
ISO P QSP Special Interest Group Student Symposium - Oral Presentation	Summer 2025
SIAM Dynamical Systems - Oral Presentation	Summer 2025
ICERM Workshop on Uncertainty Quantification - Poster	Summer 2025
University of Pittsburgh AWM Student Seminar Series - Oral Presentation	Spring 2025
Virginia Commonwealth University BioMath Seminar - Oral Presentation	Spring 2025
Duke Mathematical Biology Seminar - Oral Presentation	Spring 2025
Oregon State Math Bio Seminar - Oral Presentation	Spring 2025
Joint Mathematics Meeting - Oral Presentation	Spring 2025
AMS Fall Sectional Central Meeting - Oral Presentation	Fall 2024
AWM Workshop at SIAM Annual Meeting - Poster	Summer 2024
SIAM Life Sciences Meeting - Oral Presentation	Summer 2024
Association for Women in Mathematics Research Symposium - Poster	Fall 2023
Society of Mathematical Biology Annual Meeting - Oral Presentation	Summer 2023
Dynamical Systems in the Life Sciences - Oral Presentation	Summer 2023

Outreach and Service

Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics (SIAM) <i>Chapter Officer, Duke Mathematics Department</i> Organize community-building events, research talks, and career development opportunities.	Present
Women in Science Identity Group <i>Founding Member, ASCPT</i> Contributed to organizing community-building events, mentoring opportunities, and advocacy efforts to promote gender equity.	Present
Triangle Area Graduate Mathematics Conference (TAGMaC) <i>Co-organizer, Duke-UNC-NCSU Mathematics Departments</i> Rotating conference for mathematics graduate students in the NC Triangle area, sponsored by the AMS and SIAM chapters at Duke, UNC Chapel Hill, and NC State.	Present
Triangle Contest in Mathematical Modeling (TriCoMM) <i>Co-organizer, Duke Mathematics Departments</i> Local mathematical modeling contest for undergraduate students based on the international Mathematical Contest in Modeling (MCM).	Present
Association for Women in Mathematics (AWM) <i>Chapter Officer, Duke Mathematics Department</i> Coordinate community-building events, talks, and academic enrichment opportunities.	2021-2025
Semester REU <i>Graduate Student Support, Duke Mathematics Department</i> Research experience for undergraduates led by Dr. Jacob Madrid in mathematical biology and probability.	Spring 2024

Teaching

Laboratory Calculus II <i>Instructor of Record, Duke University</i> Prepared and presented lectures three days per week and co-designed exams and homework with a team of graduate instructors.	Fall 2024
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Laboratory Calculus I

Fall 2022

Instructor of Record, Duke University

Prepared and presented lectures three days per week and co-designed exams with the course coordinator (Professor Shira Viel) and a team of graduate instructors.

Laboratory Calculus I

Fall 2021

Teaching Assistant, Duke University

Led a discussion section with a partner twice a week. Facilitated group work, answered questions, gave mini-lectures, and graded exams.

Other Technical Skills

Programming Languages: Matlab (advanced), Python (proficient), R (basic)

Data Science: Regression, Classification, Ensemble Learning, Inference, neural networks