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 Modeling to Investigate Sex Differences in Oxidative Stress Management*

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

Mathematical Modeling Consultant, Zyphore Therapeutics Present
Apply mechanistic mathematical modeling and systems-level analysis of metabolic processes to inform research strategies and support experimental design in a biotech setting.
Responsibilities: parameter estimation & calibration, literature review, mechanistic model generation, and presenting work in project team meetings.

FDA QSP Research Fellow Present
Developing a QSP model of the Alternative Complement Pathway to test drugs acting on different pathway proteins and predict their impact on biomarkers in Paroxysmal Nocturnal Hemoglobinuria.
Responsibilities: virtual population generation, parameter estimation & calibration, sensitivity analysis, intensive literature review, QSP model generation, and presenting work in project team meetings.

Simulations Plus QSP Modeling Intern Summer 2024
Supported the development of the BIOLOGXsym platform, a QST software focused on complex macromolecule liver safety. My primary focus was incorporating the downstream effects of Nivolumab on the adaptive immune system and its impact on liver toxicity within BIOLOGXsym.
Responsibilities: data fitting, parameter estimation, sensitivity analysis, intensive literature review, and presenting work in project team meetings.

Johnson & Johnson Clinical Pharmacology and Pharmacometrics Intern Summer 2023
Supported the development of co-stimulatory combinations of T cell redirectors for treatment of lymphoma by incorporating and parameterizing novel mechanisms in a mechanistic mathematical model.
Responsibilities: data fitting, parameter estimation, intensive literature review, and presenting work in project team meetings.

Publications

[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. Under Review at Gastro Hep Advances.

[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.

[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 — Summer 2024

SIAM Student Chapter Certificate of Recognition — 2024

NSF RTG Research Assistantship *Duke Applied Math RTG* ($42,000) — Spring 2023, 2024, 2025

Select Presentations

Sex Differences in Oxidative Stress Management

- SIAM Annual Meeting - Oral and Poster Presentation — Summer 2025
- ISoP QSP Special Interest Group Student Symposium - 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

Comodulation of Neurotransmitters in the Brain

SIAM Dynamical Systems - Oral Presentation Summer 2025

Society of Mathematical Biology Annual Meeting - Oral Presentation Summer 2023

Dynamical Systems in the Life Sciences - Oral Presentation Summer 2023

Outreach and Service

Association for Women in Mathematics (AWM) Present

Chapter Officer, Duke Mathematics Department

Coordinate community-building events, talks, and academic enrichment opportunities.

Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics (SIAM) Present

Chapter Officer, Duke Mathematics Department

Organize community-building events, research talks, and career development opportunities.

Women in Science Identity Group Present

Founding Member, ASCPT

A group that seeks to support and empower women in the field of clinical pharmacology by fostering a collaborative community, promoting personal and career development, and advocating for gender equity within the ASCPT scientific community.

Triangle Area Graduate Mathematics Conference (TAGMaC) Present

Co-organizer, Duke-UNC-NCSU Mathematics Departments

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.

Triangle Contest in Mathematical Modeling (TriCoMM) Present

Co-organizer, Duke Mathematics Departments

Local mathematical modeling contest for undergraduate students based on the international Mathematical Contest in Modeling (MCM).

Semester REU Spring 2024

Graduate Student Support, Duke Mathematics Department

Research experience for undergraduates led by Dr. Jacob Madrid in mathematical biology and probability.

Teaching

Laboratory Calculus II Fall 2024

Instructor of Record, Duke University

Prepared and presented lectures three days per week and co-designed exams and homework with a team of graduate instructors.

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