Alex Zakarian

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https://thealexzakarian.github.io/alexzakarian.github.io/

TECHNICAL SKILLS

- Programming Languages: Python (Pandas, NumPy, TensorFlow, Scikit-learn), SQL, Java, MATLAB, Unix/Linux scripting
- Data Analysis: SPSS, Weka, Power BI, Tableau, MS Excel, statistical modeling
- Bioinformatics: BLAST, GenBank, sequence alignment, genome annotation, phylogenetic analysis, RNAseq data analysis, protein structure prediction (AlphaFold, PyMOL)
- Machine Learning & AI: Neural Networks, Genetic Algorithms, Deep Learning, Predictive Modeling, Natural Language Processing (NLP)
- **Software Development:** Object-oriented programming (OOP), multithreading, concurrency, asynchronous programming, debugging, software testing, code optimization, version control (Git), Agile methodologies
- Cellular and Molecular Biology: PCR (RT-PCR, qPCR), cloning, primer design, RNA extraction, plasmid production, gel electrophoresis, restriction digestion, mammalian cell culture, transfection, viability, and metabolic assays
- Protein Biochemistry: Protein purification, Bradford quantification, SDS-PAGE, Western blotting, luciferase assays
- **Cryopreservation:** Controlled freezing, thawing protocols, viability assessment
- Immunological Assays: ELISA, immunofluorescence
- Tools & Platforms: Jupyter Notebook, Anaconda, ClustalW, PyMOL, Power BI, Tableau

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant - Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre

07/2024 - 01/2025

- Secured \$20M in funding for the Hart Hub initiative by conducting statistical analyses, community health assessments, and presenting evidence-based justifications aligned with provincial priorities
- Led research projects by designing surveys, interviews, and focus groups to deliver actionable insights for community health initiatives
- Conducted data analysis and modeling using SPSS, SQL, and Power BI, improving decision-making through enhanced visualizations for 8,000+ health records
- Collaborated with multidisciplinary teams to present reports and recommendations to executive and government stakeholders

Clinic Manager - Crossroads North Medical Clinic

08/2021 - 07/2024

- Managed outpatient operations, enhancing processes to improve efficiency and patient outcomes
- Oversaw clinical workflows including patient triage, intake procedures, and lab specimen analysis (hematology, neurology, toxicology)
- Coordinated with multidisciplinary teams to align treatment plans with patient care goals
- Streamlined medication management processes, ensuring alignment with diagnostic data and patient safety

Research Associate Intern – Targa Biomedical

05/2023 - 09/2023

- Improved transfection efficiency and cell viability in cell culture using nanoparticles and pharmaco-optimizers
- Collaborated on a cryopreservation viability protocol to improve cell viability assessments
- Executed cell culture protocols, including cryopreservation, plasmid production, and bacterial cultures
- Performed seeding, passage, plating, transfection, and assays (nuclei staining, live/dead, metabolic) to assess cell health
- Maintained aseptic techniques, ensured lab safety, and documented experiments for clear presentation to team members and supervisors

PROJECTS

- AI-Driven Child Mortality Prediction: Developed a machine learning model using TensorFlow and Scikit-learn to predict child mortality based on nutritional data using preprocessed datasets with Python and applied Simulated Annealing and Linear Regression to uncover correlations
- Student Activity Analytics Tool: Created a Python application to analyze student activity logs, performing data cleaning, descriptive statistics, and visualizations with Pandas and Matplotlib to reveal engagement trends
- **Primer Design and PCR Optimization**: Designed primers for the MEP1B gene with restriction sites and optimized PCR protocols. Results validated through gel electrophoresis
- Structure-Based Drug Design: Analyzed HIV-1 reverse transcriptase (PDB ID: 4G1Q) using AlphaFold, PyMOL, and BLAST to predict function and identify homologous structures. Conducted virtual screening with NRGsuite to identify potential drug inhibitors

EDUCATION

MSc | Computer Science with Artificial Intelligence

University of York - 07/2024 - Present

MScA | Biotechnology (High Distinction)

McGill University

Conestoga College

- Transcriptomics Certificate
- Python Certificate
- **Project Management | Graduate Certificate (High Distinction)**
- **Honors Bachelors** | **Biology** (*High Distinction*)
 - Wilfrid Laurier University

Recipient of the Dr. Kaye Hayashida Biology Award

CERTIFICATIONS

- Good Clinical Practice (GCP)
- Health Canada Division 5 Certification
- Transportation of Dangerous Goods (TDG/IATA)
- Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)