

SICSA Distinguished Visitor Fellow Dr. Sharon Crook, Arizona State University
Host: Dr. James A. Bednar, University of Edinburgh

Dr. Crook was in residence at the University of Edinburgh in the School of Informatics from September 1 through October 5, 2011. During that period, she attended ongoing events such as seminars, met with many of the Faculty, conducted several master class lectures at the University of Edinburgh and other SICSA Institutions, and also co-organized a workshop.

In particular, Dr. Crook provided one of the primary lectures at the Neuroinformatics and Computational Neuroscience Doctoral Training Center Day on the topic "Approaches for Reproducibility in Computational Neuroscience". This lecture was well received and sparked quite a bit of discussion among the attendees. The same lecture was given as a Computer Science Seminar at the University of Stirling. Dr. Crook also visited the University of the West of Scotland in Paisley where she gave a lecture on "Describing and Exchanging Models of Neurons and Neuronal Networks with NeuroML" and met with the database and ontology group. This meeting was especially successful as it has led to ongoing interactions and potential collaborations between Dr. Crook and Drs. Junkang Feng and Malcom Crowe at the University of the West of Scotland. Several of the graduate students in the group are interested in contributing to research that will lead to a repository of NeuroML models. Dr. Crook gave an additional lecture at the University of Edinburgh on one of her modeling research areas, which focused on "A Continuum Model for Structural Plasticity of Dendritic Spines". Structural plasticity is a topic of general interest to several members of the School of Informatics and the subject of student research there.

While in Edinburgh, Dr. Crook organized an internationally attended two day workshop with co-organizers Dr. James A. Bednar of the University of Edinburgh and Dr. Hans Ekkehard Plesser of the Norwegian University of Life Sciences. The workshop focused on "Creating, Describing and Sharing Neuronal Network Models" with attendees from the UK, Germany, Norway, Sweden and the US, including Drs. Leslie Smith and Bruce Graham of the University of Stirling. The workshop has led to ongoing discussion among the attendees and plans for a workshop publication.