

Fall 2024 Physics Colloquium

Friday, November 1, 2024

3:00 PM

PAS 201 or Zoom

(<https://arizona.zoom.us/j/81283840289>)

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Optical technologies for astrophysics, Earth and planetary science

Abstract: Coherent light enables length measurements of exquisite sensitivity that lie at the core of fascinating technological advances and engineering applications, as well as observations in fundamental physics, astrophysics, geodesy, and measurement science in general.

Novel technologies and measurement principles find application in areas that are paradigm-changing; not only in fundamental science, but that directly impact the global economic and political stage. Detections from ground-based gravitational-wave observatories, like LIGO and VIRGO together with measurements of their electromagnetic counterparts, have opened a new window to observe the universe's gravitational spectrum and have reshaped astronomy and astrophysics through Gravitational Wave and Multi-Messenger observations. Plans for future observatories in space, such as LISA, are well underway with the extremely successful LISA Pathfinder mission and the formal adoption of ESA. Moreover, GRACE follow-on continues GRACE's legacy of providing information regarding climate change and our planet's geo-dynamics through valuable observations of the Earth's gravitational field, and developments are well advanced for subsequent missions both in the USA and Europe.

At the core of these exciting scientific endeavors lie innovative optomechanical technologies and precision laser interferometers that make this all possible. In my presentation, I will comment on these applications and discuss the research work conducted in my research group at the University of Arizona on the advances and implementation of novel optomechanical technologies in areas of precision measurements, inertial sensing, and scientific space missions.

** Refreshments served in PAS 218 at 2:30 PM – 3:00 PM **

