

# Optical Design of PICO, a Concept for a Space Mission to Probe Inflation and Cosmic Origins

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## ABSTRACT

Abstract Submitted Nov. 2017, needs polishing.

The Probe of Inflation and Cosmic Origins (PICO) is a probe-class mission concept currently under study by NASA. PICO will probe the physics of the Big Bang and the energy scale of inflation, constrain the sum of neutrino masses, measure the growth of structure in the universe, and constrain its reionization history by making full sky maps of the cosmic microwave background with sensitivity 70 times higher than the Planck space mission. With broad frequency coverage from a few tens to hundreds of GHz, PICO will make polarization maps of galactic synchrotron and dust emission, thus elucidating the role of galactic magnetic fields in the process of star formation.

We describe the PICO instrument, including the 1.4 meter telescope, the frequency coverage, the detector technology, and the intended survey of the sky. We will discuss the choice of optical system, present the design of the focal plane, and give the expected noise level.

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**Keywords:** Cosmic microwave background, cosmology, mm-wave optics, polarimetry, instrument design, satellite, mission concept

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Probe study language copied directly from Brian’s paper (May 6th). What level of repeat is useful and what is appropriate?

In astronomy and astrophysics, NASA currently flies small and medium Explorer missions (<\$250M), as well as multi-billion-dollar flagship observatories like JWST and WFIRST. There are a number of science opportunities that are beyond the scope of the Explorer program, but don’t require flagship-level funding. To explore these opportunities, NASA has funded studies of 10 ‘Probe’ class (\$400M-\$1B) mission concepts. The Probe of Inflation and Cosmic Origins (PICO) is one of these mission studies. Reports of these mission studies are due to NASA at the end of the 2018 and NASA’s plan is to forward the reports for consideration by the next Astronomy and Astrophysics Decadal panel. This paper comes part way through the PICO study, and describes a snapshot of the instrument design at this time in the study.

Brian’s science section copied in .tex document. Repeating all of that here seems inappropriate. I have attempted to summarize. Mostly this is the first paragraph from Brian’s paper.

Astrophysical observations in the millimeter and sub-millimeter region of the electromagnetic spectrum contain a wealth of information about the formation, evolution, and current structure of the Universe. Large scale cosmological and fundamental physics information, such as evidence of inflation, the effect of the first stars and galaxies, constraints on neutrino masses, and limits on new light particles beyond the standard model, is contained in the temperature and polarization anisotropies of the cosmic microwave background (CMB). Information about the role of magnetic fields in star formation and galactic evolution is obtainable by observing the polarized emission of Galactic dust, which traces magnetic fields, at high resolution. Targeting both of these regimes, PICO will survey the entire sky with unprecedented polarization sensitivity in 21 bands centered at 21–799 GHz. Details of these science targets and expected constraints from PICO are in a companion paper, Sutin et al.<sup>1</sup> In this paper we discuss the optical system, focal plane, and expected sensitivity of PICO.

## 2. SPACECRAFT AND MISSION

The PICO mission plan is to conduct scientific observations for five years from the Earth-Sun L2 Lagrange point. The spacecraft design impacts the optical design and sensitivity in two primary ways; volume constraints limit the physical size of the telescope and optical component temperatures impact noise levels. We discuss these major drivers here, other details are given by Sutin et al.<sup>1</sup>

The maximum size of the spacecraft is limited by the assumed launch vehicle, the Falcon 9, which carries payloads up to 4.6 m in diameter. This diameter limit sets the V-groove size which, along with the scan strategy, defines the ‘shadow cone’ in Figure 1. The shadow cone is the volume which is protected from solar illumination, and all optical components must remain within it. The shadow cone and inner V-grooves define an available volume for the telescope.

The temperatures of all optical elements are given in Figure 1. The primary passively cools to 40 K, as was seen for *Planck*.<sup>2</sup> The secondary, optics box, and aperture stop are actively cooled to 6 K. The focal plane is cooled by a continuous ADR to 100 mK.

## 3. OPTICAL SYSTEM

The PICO telescope is a 1.4 m modified Open Dragone. This choice was driven by a combination of science requirements and the physical limits discussed in Section 2. The science requirements are; a large diffraction limited field of view (DLFOV) sufficient to support  $\mathcal{O}(10^4)$  detectors, arcminute resolution at 800 GHz, low instrumental polarization, and low sidelobe response. Additionally, the transition edge sensor bolometers baseline for PICO require a telecentric focal plane which is sufficiently flat that it can be tiled by 10 cm detector wafers without reduction in optical quality. These requirements suggest an off-axis Dragone system<sup>3</sup> similar to

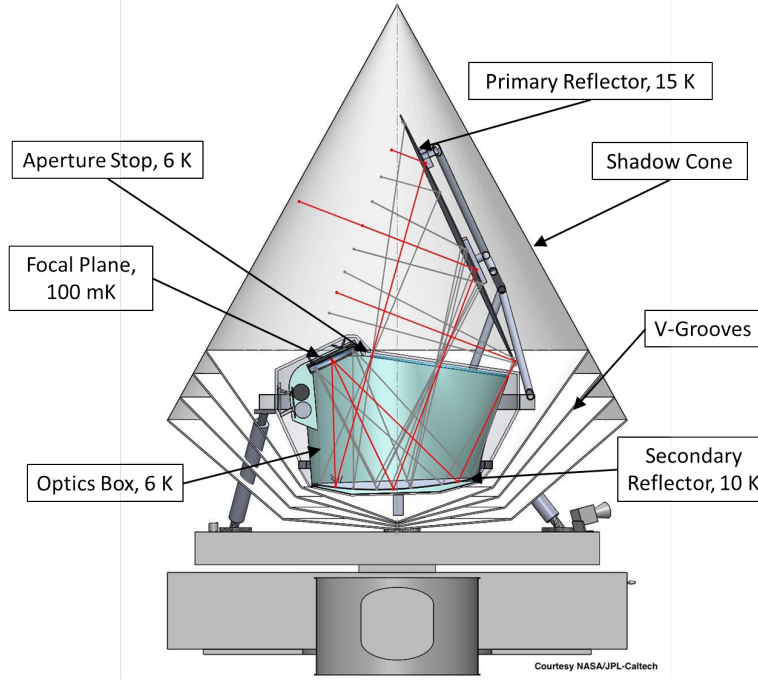


Figure 1. Mechanical design of the PICO satellite. Components relevant to this paper are labeled, for other details see Sutin et al.<sup>1</sup> **Update temperatures with final numbers from JPL**

what has been used for *Planck*,<sup>4</sup> various ground based systems such as ACT<sup>5</sup> and SPT,<sup>6</sup> and in the CORE<sup>7</sup> and LiteBIRD<sup>8</sup> designs.

The geometric parameters of the PICO optical system are given in Table 1 and the ray trace in Figure 2. The system is diffraction limited, Strehl greater than 0.8, at the center of the field of view for 799 GHz and has a DLFOV of 82.4 deg<sup>2</sup> at 155 GHz. Strehl of 0.8 contours for all pixel types are shown in Figure 2. The focal plane is telecentric to within 0.12 deg across the entire surface.

To arrive at the final design we modify an Open Dragone. We design the initial Open Dragone following Granet’s method.<sup>9</sup> We find a solution which satisfies the volume constraints and has a large DLFOV. We force a circular aperture stop between the primary and secondary mirrors and numerically optimize its angle and position to obtain the best optical performance. We choose the stop diameter to provide an effective 1.4 m aperture on the primary for the center feed. Adding a stop in this way increases the size of the primary mirror, effectively the primary is unevenly illuminated at various field angles, but reduces detector noise, see Section 5, and controls sidelobes. At this stage the system still meets the Dragone condition and is defined by the ‘Initial Open Dragone’ parameters in Table 1.

To increase the optical performance we use CodeV to numerically optimize the system. To adjust the mirror shapes, we add a low order, 4th and 9th-13th, Zernike polynomial correction to each conic surface. We allow focal plane curvature, a focal plane tilt angle, and the focal plane to secondary distance to vary. The primary-secondary distance, primary offset  $h$ , and the primary and secondary rotation angles,  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$ , are varied as well. The optimization metric is the rms spot size across the field of view, with additional weighted constraints requiring telecentricity and maintaining the x- and y-focal lengths. We also added Lagrange constraints to enforce beam clearances and put an upper limit on overall system size. Once the optimization converged to an acceptable optical system, we added the higher order Zernike terms, 19th-25th, and refined the mirror shapes using the same metric and constraints.

Figure 3 shows the optimization reduced the overall telescope volume, allowing it to fit more easily within the shadow cone, and increased the DLFOV. The most important increase in the DLFOV is at 155 and 186 GHz. This added area allows us to add ‘C’ and ‘D’ pixels which are critical to meeting PICO’s cosmology and fundamental

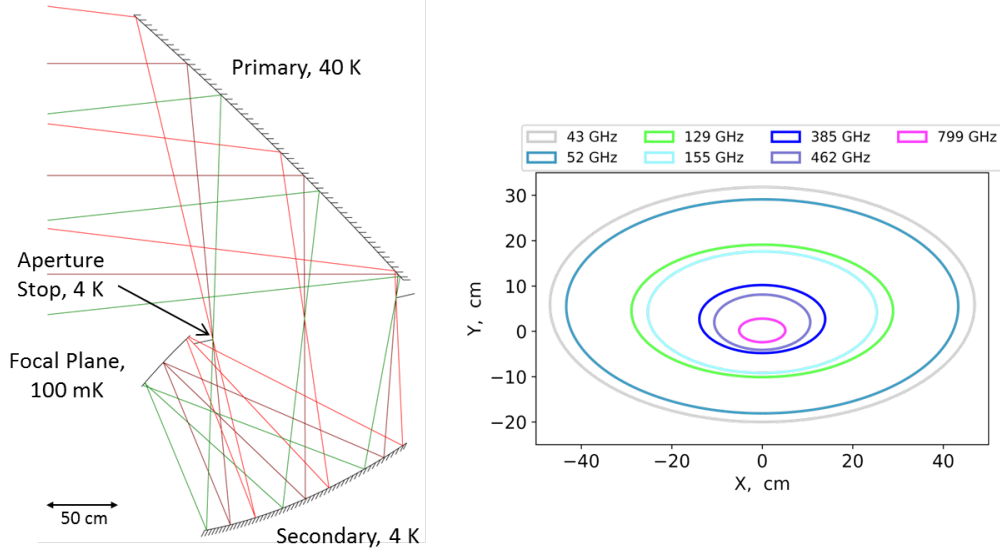


Figure 2. Raytrace (left) and Strehl = 0.8 contours (right) for the PICO optical design.

Table 1. Telescope geometric parameters

PICO optical system					Initial Open Dragone <sup>b</sup>	
	Primary	Secondary	Telescope parameters <sup>b</sup>		Fundamental design parameters	
Size <sup>a</sup> (cm)	270 × 205	160 × 158	Aperture (cm)	140	Aperture (cm)	140
Radius of curvature (cm)	∞	136.6	Focal ratio, F	1.42	θ <sub>0</sub> (degrees)	90
Conic constant, <i>k</i>	0	-0.926	h (cm)	624.2	θ <sub><i>e</i></sub> (degrees)	20
Normalization radius (cm)	524.8	194.1	α (deg)	74.2	θ <sub><i>p</i></sub> (degrees)	140
4th Zernike Coefficient	2018.4	-61.1	β (deg)	62.3	L <sub><i>m</i></sub> (cm)	240
9th Zernike Coefficient	-37.0	16.7	L <sub><i>m</i></sub> (cm)	229.3		
10th Zernike Coefficient	-2919.8	-15.1	L <sub><i>s</i></sub> (cm)	140.5		
11th Zernike Coefficient	-1292.7	22.3			Derivative parameters	
12th Zernike Coefficient	120.6	-3.8			Focal ratio, F	1.42
13th Zernike Coefficient	-74.5	4.9	Focal Plane		h (cm)	624.2
19th Zernike Coefficient	-75.8	3.4	Diameter (cm)	69 x 45	α (deg)	38.6
20th Zernike Coefficient	-398.9	6.3	Diameter (deg)	19 x 13	β (deg)	101.4
21st Zernike Coefficient	-319.5	23.3	Radius of curvature (cm)	455	L <sub><i>s</i></sub> (cm)	122.2
22nd Zernike Coefficient	-276.6	-8.5			Primary, <i>f</i> (cm)	312.1
23rd Zernike Coefficient	-201.6	-3.2			Secondary, <i>a</i> (cm)	131
24th Zernike Coefficient	-127.4	-1.9			Secondary, <i>e</i>	1.802
25th Zernike Coefficient	-55.0	0.1				

<sup>a</sup> The maximum physical size of the mirrors.

<sup>b</sup> Telescope parameters follow the definitions in Granet 2001.<sup>9</sup>

physics science goals, because they contain the bands most sensitive to the CMB. Being able to pack 100's of 'C' and 'D' pixels into the focal plane is what allows PICO to reach unprecedented levels of CMB sensitivity.

An additional benefit of the optimization is the concave focal plane. The Open Dragone's focal surface is naturally curved, so matching this curvature reduces defocus and increases the DLFOV as well as increasing telecentricity. The unoptimized system is telecentric to within 2.5° while the optimized version is telecentric to within 0.12°. If the focal plane is too strongly curved tiling it with flat detector wafers would result in large defocus at the edges of these wafers. This is not the case for PICO. The focal plane radius of curvature, 4.55 m, results in a defocus of 0.1 mm for the edge of a 10 cm wafer.

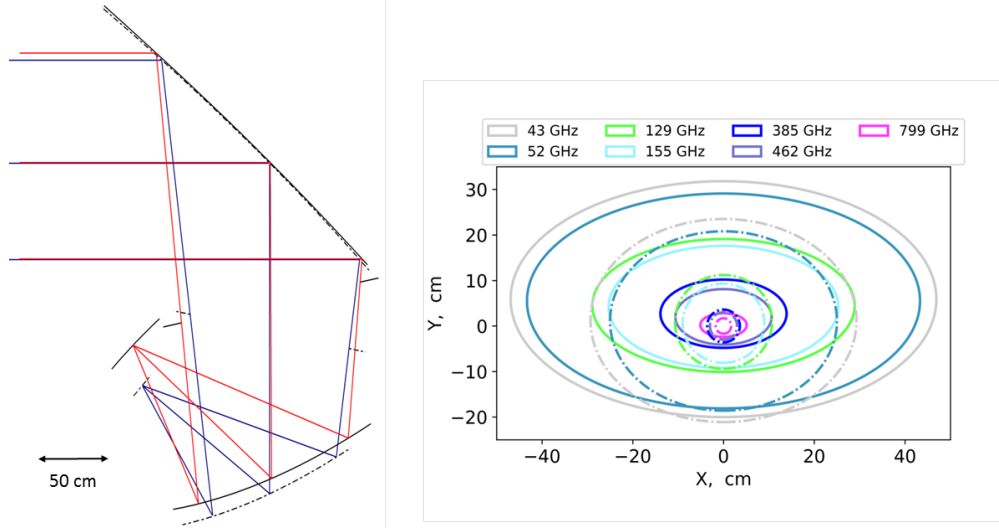


Figure 3. Comparison between optimized and unoptimized Open Dragones. The raytraces (left) are aligned at the chief ray impact point on the primary. The optimized system (red rays, solid mirrors) is smaller vertically and has a slightly flatter primary than the unoptimized version (blue rays, dash-dot mirrors). The overlaid  $\text{Strehl} = 0.8$  contours (right) show the improvement at all frequencies in the optimized (solid lines) over the unoptimized (dash-dot lines) system.

We considered two additional Dragone systems; a Gregorian Dragone like that used for *Planck* and a Crossed Dragone similar to that planned for CORE or LiteBIRD. With half the diffraction limited focal plane area of the Open Dragone,<sup>7</sup> the Gregorian Dragone is unable to support  $\mathcal{O}(10^4)$  detectors, so was rejected. The Crossed Dragone has roughly  $4\times$  the diffraction limited focal plane area of the Open, but it has well known issues with sidelobes as shown in Figure 4 and always has a larger F-number than the Open system. The larger F-number results in a larger telescope that fits poorly into the shadow cone. The largest Crossed Dragone that meets the PICO volume constraints has a 1.2 m aperture while the largest Open Dragone is 1.4 m. The large F-number of the Crossed system also increases the physical focal plane size, and therefore mass and cost, for a fixed number of pixels. These disadvantages, and the success of the optimized Open Dragone, led us to the final PICO optical system detailed in Table 1 and shown in Figure 2.

#### 4. FOCAL PLANE

Modern mm/sub-mm detectors are photon noise limited, so the primary way to increase sensitivity is to increase the number of detectors. The PICO focal plane has 12,996 detectors,  $175\times$  the number flown on *Planck*. PICO achieves this by having a large DLFOV and using multichroic pixels (MCP).<sup>10</sup> The architecture assumed for PICO uses three bands per pixel; each pixel contains two single polarization transition edge sensor (TES) bolometers per band and therefore six bolometers total. We assume the MCP are coupled to free space using lenslets,<sup>10</sup> however the pixel size, number, and spacing is relatively agnostic to the coupling scheme, so current layout would not change significantly if horn or phased array coupling was used instead.

We designed PICO with 21 overlapping bands centered at 21–799 GHz and divided amongst nine pixel types, A–I; see Figure 5. These bands provide the broad frequency coverage needed to separate the CMB, Galactic dust, and various foregrounds using their differing spectra. The 25% fractional bandwidth is broader than the interband spacing, so the neighboring bands overlap and must be in separate pixels. For example, bands 1, 3, and 5 are in pixel A while bands 2, 4, and 6 are in pixel B. This complicates the pixel design and focal plane layout, but allows broader bands to increase total sensitivity.

The exceptions to this MCP architecture are the highest three bands. These three bands are above the superconducting band gap of niobium, so the niobium transmission lines and filters used in MCP are unsuitable. Instead we will use polarization sensitive, feedhorn coupled bolometers at these frequencies, similar to the *Planck*<sup>11</sup> or Herschel SPIRE<sup>12</sup> detectors.

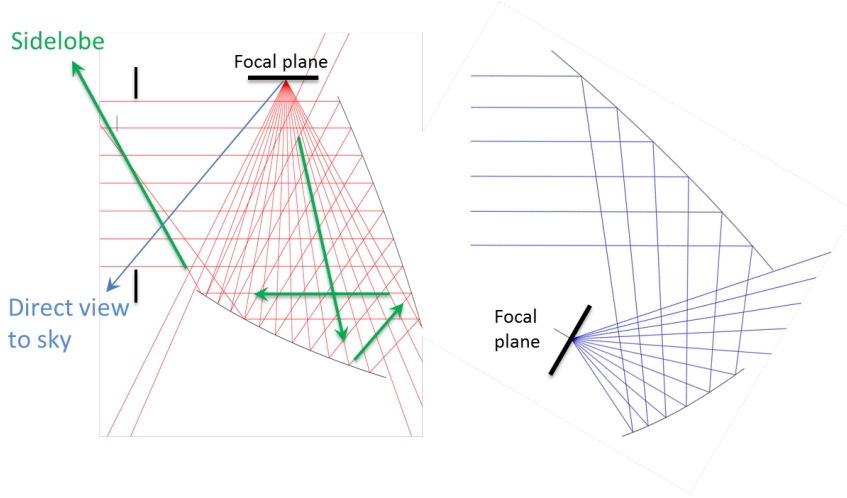


Figure 4. Comparison of sidelobes for example Crossed (left) and Open (right) Dragones. Rays are traced from the center of the focal plane toward the sky. For both systems spillover around the secondary is straightforward to mitigate with absorptive baffles. However, the sidelobe and direct sky view in the Crossed system require a long forebaffle or large F-number to mitigate, both of which were problematic in the PICO case.

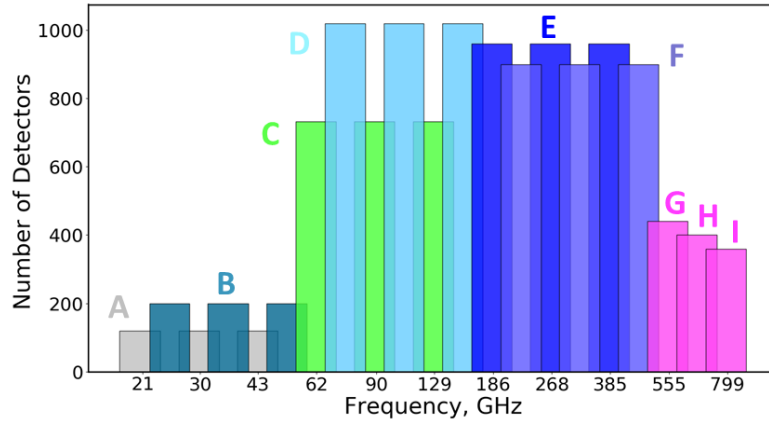


Figure 5. Frequency coverage of the PICO bands. Each color (excluding magenta) denotes a different MCP, labeled A-F. The bar height indicates the number of detectors per band. Width gives the bandwidth, all are top-hats with 25% fractional bandwidth; the  $x$ -axis is logarithmic. The three highest frequencies (magenta) are single color pixels G, H, I. Confusion likely because 'E' is blue in this plot, but cyan in the focal plane. Need to address this.

The PICO focal plane is designed to take maximum advantage of the large field of view. The optical quality peaks at the focal plane center and falls off with radius as shown in Figure 2. This pattern dictates the layout shown in Figure 6. The highest frequency pixels are centered on the focal plane and low frequency pixels are arranged around the edge. The maximum radial distance for a given pixel is the point where the Strehl ratio for the upper edge of the highest frequency band within that pixel equals 0.8. Interior to these contours, the ellipses in Figure 6, the Strehl ratio increases ensuring pixels are diffraction limited.

Optimizing the pixel size is a balance between the total number of pixels,  $N_{px}$ , and the efficiency with which they couple to the telescope. Smaller pixels pack more densely on the focal plane,  $N_{px} \propto 1/D_{px}^2$ , but over illuminate the stop which reduces optical efficiency and adds optical load. We choose a pixel diameter of  $2.1F\lambda_{mid}$ , where  $\lambda_{mid}$  refers to the center band of each pixel. This gives an edge taper,  $T_e$ , on the stop of 10 dB for the center band. Due to the multichroic nature of the pixels  $T_e$  varies with band, details in Section 5. We



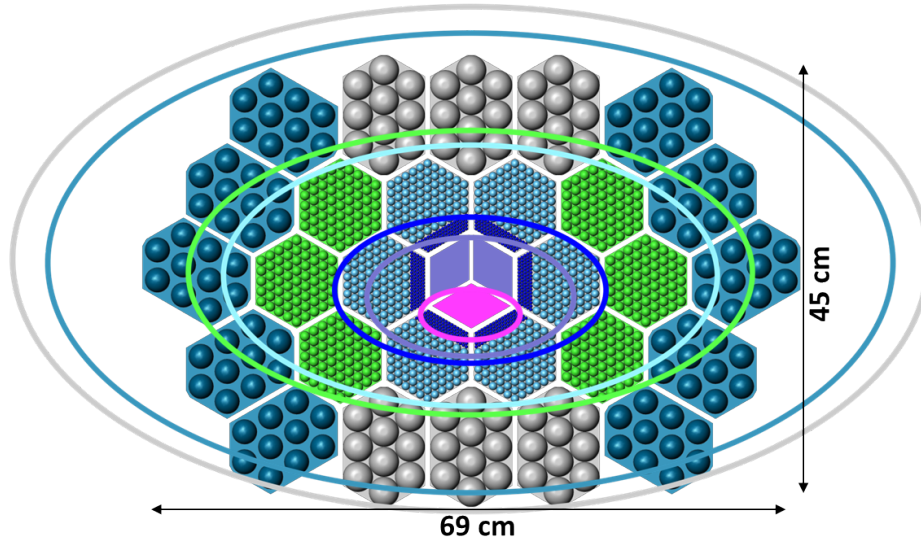


Figure 6. PICO focal plane layout with Strehl = 0.8 contours for each pixel type. The pixel and Strehl contour colors match the band colors, A-I, in Figure 5 Strehls make in more visible format, certainly cyan contours.

hex-pack pixels onto 94 mm hexagonal wafers to minimize wasted space for the mid-frequency pixels. The three central wafers have the same 94 mm hexagon footprint but are split into 3 rhombi, shown in Figure 6, because the highest frequency magenta wafer will use different detector technology and will need to be fabricated separately.

For each pixel type we orient neighboring pixels at  $45^\circ$  to each other as shown in Figure 7. Intro words?? To measure Stokes Q and U we adjust the polarization orientation of neighboring pixels such oriented at 0 and  $90^\circ$ , sensitive to Stokes Q and  $\pm 45^\circ$ , sensitive to U. Each wafer is laid out to maximize the following . . . scan . . . sky hits . . . language . . . Q/U ? and syst.

Each MCP is sensitive to only Stokes Q or U. To measure both Q and U we rotate the polarization orientation of adjacent pixels which scan over the same sky location by  $45^\circ$  as shown in Figure 7. Adjacent columns of Q and U pixels sample the same sky locations at a slight delay minimize systematics from drifts in detector response which are slower than the scan speed. order 0.5 sec is longer than the sample time even at 1 deg beams.

QU observations of single location follow each other on the sky, so same location is observed in Q and U 'simultaneously' almost.

Discuss Q/U orientation?

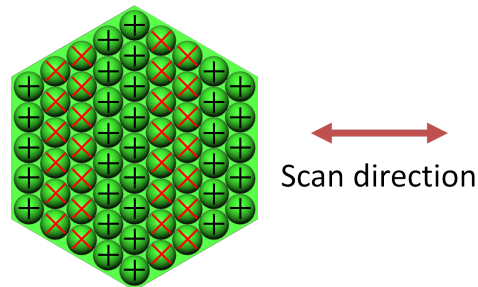


Figure 7. Layout of pixels sensitive to Stokes Q (black crosses) and Stokes U (red exes) for an example wafer.

Reading out 12,996 TES bolometers requires significant multiplexing. Time domain (TDM) and frequency domain (FDM) multiplexing were explored for PICO, tradeoff details are in Sutin et al.<sup>1</sup> The current PICO

baseline is TDM, but the choice is not a driver for the focal plane layout or noise discussed in this paper.

## 5. NOISE MODEL

comment somewhere in this section that these noise numbers are CBE. no margins.

We developed an end to end white noise only model of the PICO instrument to predict full mission sensitivity and provide a metric by which to evaluate optical, mechanical, and mission design tradeoffs. To simplify the model, we assume TES bolometers as the detector at all frequencies, even though other technologies may be better suited to the lowest bands. Any suitable technology will be photon noise dominated as the TESs are, so total noise levels in the lowest bands should be relatively unaffected by the use of a different detector technology. We constructed the model following the methods in Ref. 13 and 14; estimate the optical load, calculate properties of the TES bolometers, calculate noise equivalent power (NEP) for each source, combine all NEP terms to get detector noise, and finally calculate full mission sensitivity. Each of these steps includes various assumptions and design decisions, which are discussed in this section. The assumptions are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Noise model assumptions, see text for details.

Throughput	single moded, $\lambda^2$
Fractional Bandwidth	25%
Mirror emissivity	$\epsilon = \epsilon_0 \sqrt{\nu/150 \text{ GHz}}, \epsilon_0 = 0.07\%$
Aperture stop emissivity	1
Low pass filter reflection loss	8%
Low pass filter absorption loss <sup>a</sup>	frequency dependent, 0.2%–2.8%
Bolometer absorption efficiency	70%
$T_e$ , middle band in pixel (dB)	10
Mission length (years)	5
Observing efficiency	95%
Safety factor, $P_{sat}/P_{abs}$	2
Bose noise fraction, $\xi$	1
$T_o$ (mK)	100
$T_c$ (mK)	187
Thermal power law index, $n$	2
Intrinsic SQUID noise (aW/ $\sqrt{\text{Hz}}$ )	3
TES operating resistance, $\Omega$	0.03
TES transition slope, $\alpha$	100
TES loop gain	14

<sup>a</sup>Assumes separate metal mesh in polypropylene filters for each wafer.

### 5.1 Single bolometer noise

The sources of optical load are the CMB, primary and secondary mirrors, the aperture stop, and a low pass optical filter. These elements are shown schematically in Figure 8. We assume the primary is 40 K, the stop and secondary 4 K, and the low pass filter 100 mK. The emissivity of the mirrors depends on frequency,  $\epsilon(\nu) = \epsilon_0 \sqrt{\nu/(150 \text{ GHz})}$ . At 150 GHz we assume an emissivity of 0.07%.<sup>2,15</sup>

The total load absorbed at the bolometer is the sum of the power emitted by each element reduced by the optical efficiency of the elements between the emitting surface and the bolometer. For example, the CMB power is reduced by the optical efficiency of the entire instrument,  $\eta_{opt} = \eta_{PRI}\eta_{stop}\eta_{SEC}\eta_{filter}\eta_{bolo}$ , while the power emitted by the low pass filter is reduced only by  $\eta_{bolo}$ . The absorbed power is,

$$P_{abs} = (((P_{CMB}\eta_{PRI} + P_{PRI})\eta_{stop} + P_{stop}(1 - \eta_{stop}))\eta_{SEC} + P_{SEC})\eta_{filter} + P_{filter})\eta_{bolo}, \quad (1)$$

where  $P_{elem}$  is the in band power emitted by a given element for a single polarization and  $\eta_{elem}$  is the efficiency of the element. We assumed 25% fractional bandwidth top-hat bands and throughput of  $\lambda^2$ . Power from the



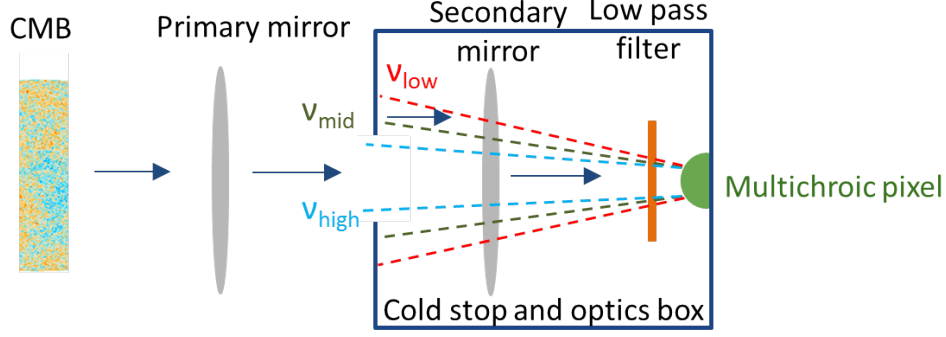


Figure 8. Schematic representation of the prediction of optical load. Power emitted by each element is modified by the efficiency of the following elements and added to the total expected load. The multichroic pixel illuminates the stop differently for each of the three bands.

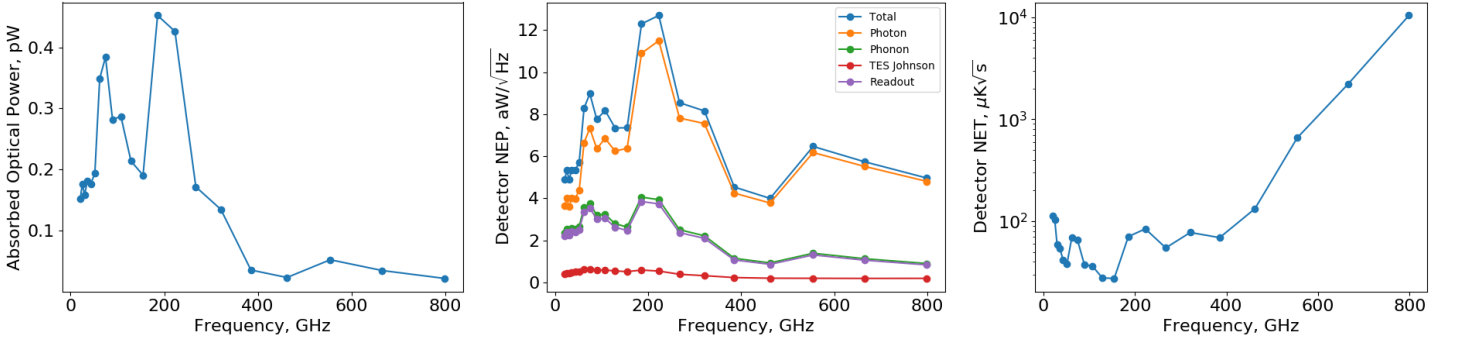


Figure 9. Left: Expected optical loads for single polarization PICO bolometers. Center: Breakdown of NEP across the PICO frequency range. Photon noise dominates even at the lowest frequencies. Right: Per detector NET, temperature sensitivity, across the PICO bands. could add CORE NETs here for comparison. could add zoom around 150 GHz.

stop is a special case. We multiply  $P_{stop}$  by  $(1 - \eta_{stop})$  because  $\eta_{stop}$  is spillover efficiency, the fraction of the throughput which passes through the stop, so  $(1 - \eta_{stop})$  is the fraction of the throughput which views the stop.

For PICO, the CMB and stop are the major load at low frequencies while and mirror emission is the majority above 460 GHz due to their differing temperatures, see Figure 9. The jumps in load between neighboring bands in Figure 9, around 70 and 200 GHz are due to  $\eta_{stop}$  changing with frequency. This is driven by the use of multichroic pixels whose angular beam pattern is dependent on the pixel diameter,<sup>13</sup>

$$\theta_{1/e^2} = \frac{2.95\lambda}{\pi D_{px}}. \quad (2)$$

The edge taper,  $T_e$ , of the middle frequency band in each pixel is chosen to be 10 dB. For the upper and lower bands  $T_e$  is calculated using Equation 2. This changing illumination of the stop is shown schematically by the dashed rays in Figure 8. For each MCP, A-H,  $T_e$  is 4.8, 10, and 20.7 dB for the lower, middle, and upper bands, respectively. These edge tapers correspond to  $\eta_{stop}$  of 0.68, 0.90, and 0.99. The changing  $\eta_{stop}$  has three main effects; uneven optical load between bands, varying NEP to noise equivalent temperature (NET) conversion between bands, and telescope beam size not scaling smoothly with  $\lambda$ .

From  $P_{abs}$  we calculate the TES bolometer properties for each band. We assume a safety factor of 2,  $P_{sat}/P_{abs} = 2$ ;  $P_{sat}$  is the saturation power of the bolometer. The PICO focal plane temperature,  $T_o$ , of 100 mK sets an optimal superconducting transition temperature,  $T_c$ , of 187 mK. We assume thermal conductivity scales

as a power law,  $G \propto T^n$ , with  $n = 2$ . The required thermal conductivity for a given bolometer is set by the  $P_{sat}$ ,

$$G = \frac{P_{sat}}{T_c} (n+1) \frac{1}{1 - (T_o T_c)^{n+1}}. \quad (3)$$

We consider three noise sources per bolometer; photon, phonon, and readout. Photon noise depends on the absorbed power,<sup>16</sup>

$$NEP_\gamma^2 = \int_{band} 2h\nu p d\nu + 2\xi \int_{band} p^2 d\nu, \quad (4)$$

where  $p$  is the power spectral density for a single polarization absorbed at the bolometer and  $\xi$  is the fraction of correlated Bose photon noise. We assume  $\xi = 1$ . For PICO,  $NEP_{Bose}/NEP_{Poisson} = 1.5$  in the lowest band, but since Bose noise does not scale with  $\sqrt{\nu}$  as Poisson does  $NEP_{Bose}/NEP_{Poisson} < 10\%$  at 321 GHz. The second largest noise term is phonon noise<sup>17</sup> in the thermal connection to  $T_o$ ,

$$NEP_{phonon}^2 = 4\gamma k_b T_c^2 G, \quad (5)$$

where  $\gamma$  is a unitless factor depending on  $T_o$ ,  $T_c$ , and  $n$ . For PICO  $\gamma = 0.5$ . Readout noise depends on the assumption of FDM or TDM readout and includes all remaining noise sources, the Johnson noise of the TES as well as all components not intrinsic to the bolometers. For both multiplexing schemes  $NEP_{readout}$  is dominated by the SQUID amplifier with moderate contributions from various resistors and amplifiers in the readout chain. We calculate noise for both FDM and TDM systems, though TDM is the current baseline, and find both to be below both photon and phonon noise for all bands. Both systems give similar noise levels, with total noise differing by less than 3% in all bands. Some thought has been put into optimizing the readout systems for space, but since the expected noise is already sufficiently low this was not pursued in detail. For TDM and FDM the noise primarily scales with TES bias voltage which depends on the electrical power needed to operate the TES,

$$NEP_{readout}^2 \propto V_{bias}^2 \propto P_e, \text{ and} \quad (6)$$

$$P_e = P_{sat} - P_{abs}.$$

This neglects the details of our readout noise models, but is an illustrative approximation usefull for this paper.

The noise breakdown in Figure 9 drives various aspects of the PICO design. Since photon noise dominates at all frequencies and photon noise scales with  $\sqrt{P_{abs}}$ , Equation 4, the primary driver of noise is optical load. The second largest source of noise is phonon noise. Combining Equations 3 and 5 we see  $NEP_{phonon}$  scales with  $\sqrt{T_c}$  and  $\sqrt{P_{sat}}$ . Cooling the focal plane to 100 mK reduces  $T_c$  since  $T_c \propto T_o$ . The saturation power depends on the choice of safety factor,  $P_{sat}/P_{abs}$ , as well as on optical load. We choose safety factor of two to lower noise, while providing margin for unexpected loads or variations in  $G$  of the fabricated bolometers. Readout noise scales with  $\sqrt{P_{sat} - P_{abs}}$ , Equation 6, which is reduced by reducing the safety factor or  $P_{abs}$ . From this analysis we see that all noise sources depend on  $P_{abs}$ , either directly or through how load drives bolometer properties. Therefore the most straightforward way to reduce noise is to limit all optical loads other than the CMB. This motivates the simple, few element telescope we have designed with the aperture stop and secondary mirror actively cooled to reduce excess load and photon noise.

## 5.2 Combined array noise

Using single detector NEPs as per Section 5.1 and the detector counts from Section 4 we calculate the combined NEP of the detector array for each band. Generally, combining detectors simply reduces noise by  $\sqrt{N}$ . The one exception is Bose photon noise. For the lowest band of each MCP the pixels oversample the PSF, pixel spacing is  $0.4F\lambda$ , resulting in correlated Bose noise bewteen pixels. Accounting for this effect gives a **XX%** increase in the combined array  $NEP$  of the lowest band, 21 GHz, and only a **XX%** increase in the highest band, 799 GHz.

From the array  $NEP$  we convert to  $NET$  per band,

$$NET = \frac{NEP}{\sqrt{2}\eta_{opt} \int_{band} \frac{dP}{dT} \Big|_{T_{CMB}} d\nu}. \quad (7)$$

The  $\eta_{opt}$  term contributes to the ‘jumps’ in  $NET$  seen in Figure 9 since  $\eta_{opt}$  varies band to band. We use CMB temperature units for all bands, even though this isn’t particularly suitable for the highest bands, because the CMB is the most stringent requirement on sensitivity.

All the above calculations have been for sensitivity to temperature and are given in Table 3. Assuming evenly weighted observations of the full sky and 5 years observing at 95% efficiency we calculate full mission map sensitivities in polarization; final column in Table 3. Combining all bands gives a total CMB map depth for the entire PICO mission of  $0.62 \mu K_{CMB}$ -arcmin.

Table 3. PICO frequency channels and noise.

Pixel Type	Band GHz	FWHM arcmin	Bolometer NEP $aW/\sqrt{Hz}$	Bolometer NET $\mu K_{CMB}\sqrt{s}$	$N_{bolo}$	Array NET $\mu K_{CMB}\sqrt{s}$	Polarization map depth $\mu K_{CMB}$ -arcmin
A	21	38.4	4.89	112.2	120	12.9	18.2
B	25	32.0	5.33	103.0	200	9.07	12.8
A	30	28.3	4.92	59.4	120	5.60	7.88
B	36	23.6	5.36	54.4	200	3.96	5.58
A	43	22.2	5.33	41.7	120	3.80	5.36
B	52	18.4	5.73	38.4	200	2.71	3.82
C	62	12.8	8.29	69.2	732	2.97	4.19
D	75	10.7	8.98	65.4	1020	2.34	3.29
C	90	9.5	7.76	37.7	732	1.41	1.99
D	108	7.9	8.18	36.2	1020	1.15	1.61
C	129	7.4	7.35	27.8	732	1.03	1.45
D	155	6.2	7.36	27.5	1020	0.86	1.21
E	186	4.3	12.30	70.8	960	2.39	3.36
F	223	3.6	12.70	84.2	900	2.89	4.07
E	268	3.2	8.55	54.8	960	1.77	2.49
F	321	2.6	8.16	77.6	900	2.59	3.64
E	385	2.5	4.54	69.1	960	2.23	3.14
F	462	2.1	4.00	132.6	900	4.42	6.22
G	555	1.5	6.47	657.8	440	31.4	44.1
H	666	1.3	5.74	2212	400	111	156
I	799	1.1	4.97	10430	360	550	774
Total					12996	0.44	0.62

## 6. CONCLUSIONS/SUMMARY

- Total full sky map sensitivity, compare to Planck, LB, and S4? or do so in intro?

simple telescope. low noise? low systematics? - systematics not discussed elsewhere (yet)

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