



VIRGINIA TECH™

A photograph of a satellite in space, showing its solar panels and the Earth below. The Earth's horizon is visible, and the atmosphere shows a gradient from blue to orange.

VT Spaceflight Infrastructure Improvements

Fall 2018

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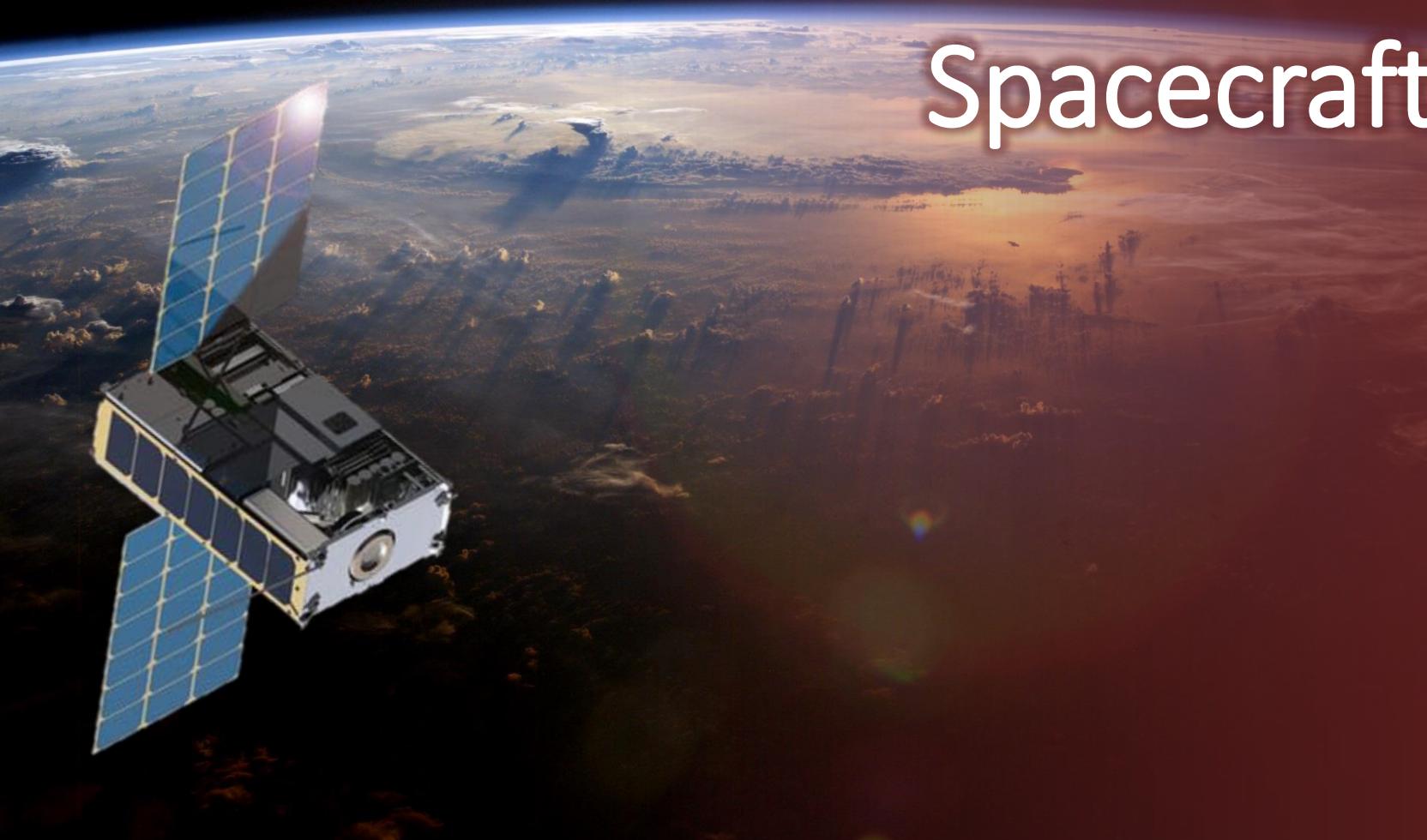


Introduction

Dr. Jonathan Black



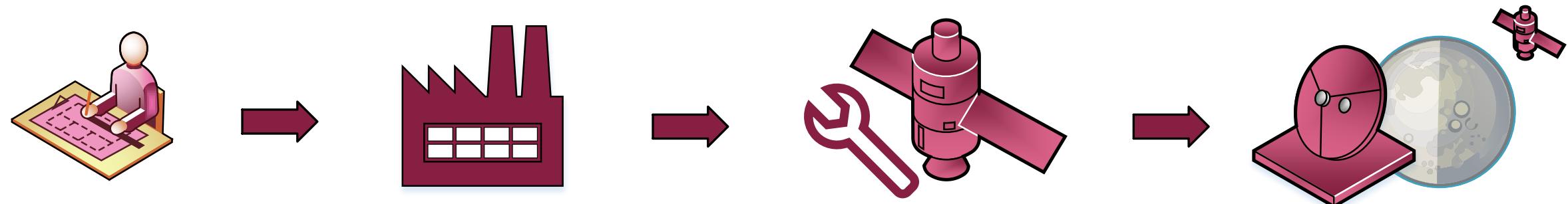
VIRGINIA TECH™

A photograph of a satellite in orbit around Earth. The satellite is positioned on the left side of the frame, showing its solar panels and body against the dark void of space. Below it, the Earth's horizon is visible, with a vibrant orange and yellow sunset or sunrise over the clouds and landmasses. The title text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Spacecraft Engineering at Virginia Tech

Stephen Noel
Research Faculty

Virginia Tech Space Mission Life Cycle



CONCEPT AND DESIGN

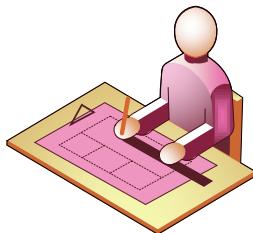
PLANNING & FABRICATION

INTEGRATION AND TESTING

MISSION OPS

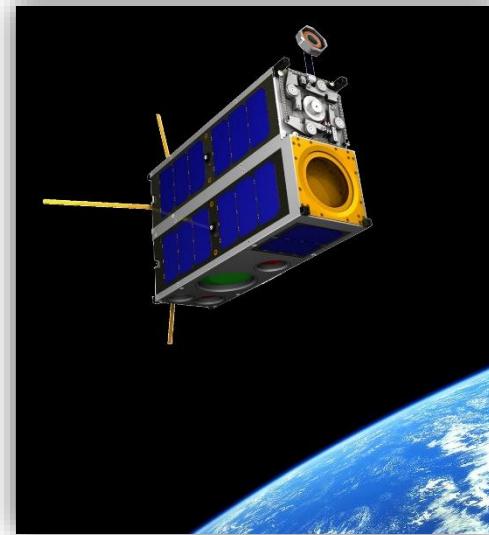
- Requirements Definition
- Conceptual Design
- Design Reviews
- Modelling and Simulation
- Prototyping and Testing
- Licensing
- Test and Ops Planning
- GSE Development
- Environmental Testing
- End-to-end Testing
- Health and Safety Monitoring
- Command and Control

Current Capabilities

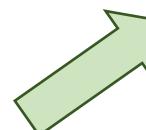


CONCEPT AND DESIGN

- Requirements Definition
- Conceptual Design
- Design Reviews
- Modelling and Simulation



LAICE 6U CubeSat



- Experience in NASA design approach
- AOE senior design teaches strong systems engineering skills
- Templates and examples available from previous projects like:
 - LAICE
 - HokieBus
 - SharkSat

LEGEND:

Strong capabilities and/or experience

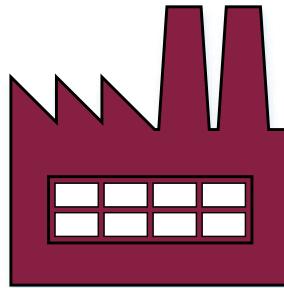
Experience - room for improvement

Need for growth/capability

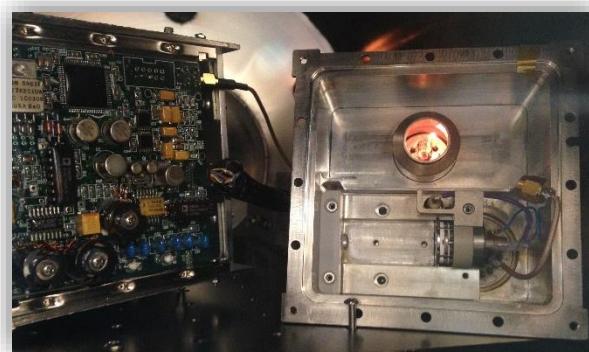
NEED: Reusable, flexible mission planning resource

- Usually custom-built for individual missions
- Most simulation needs at this phase are:
 - Science access time
 - Power budget/management simulation
 - Lifetime analysis
 - Ground station access analysis

Current Capabilities



FCC Experimental Licensing



LAICE LINAS payload testing

PLANNING & FABRICATION

- Prototyping and Testing
- Licensing
- Test and Ops Planning
- GSE Development



Orbital Debris Assessment Report (ODAR)

NEED: Central command/control and logging resource for subsystem testing



NATIONAL INSTRUMENTS
LabVIEW

- Custom-built for individual missions

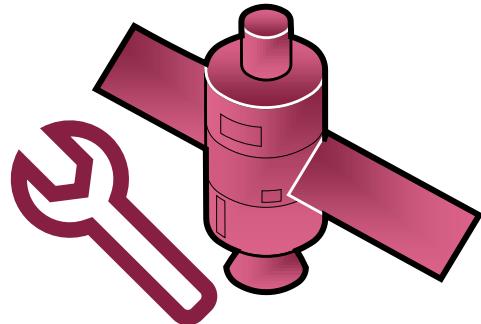
LEGEND:

Strong capabilities and/or experience

Experience - room for improvement

Need for growth/capability

Current Capabilities



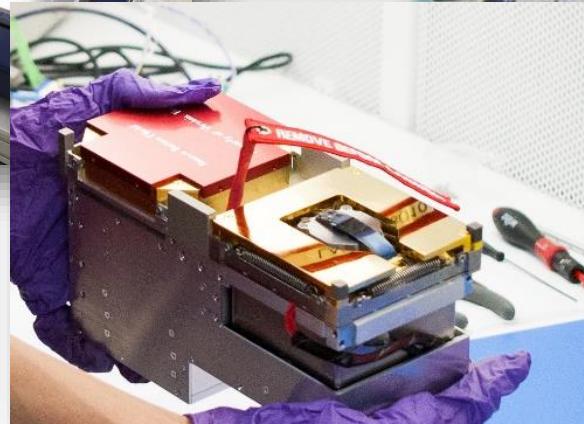
INTEGRATION AND TESTING

- Environmental Testing
- End-to-end Testing



LEGEND:

- Strong capabilities and/or experience
- Experience - room for improvement
- Need for growth/capability

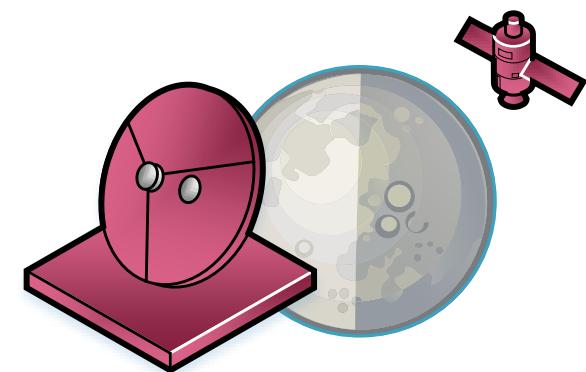


NEED: Reusable and scalable flight software



NEED: Central command/control and logging resource for subsystem testing

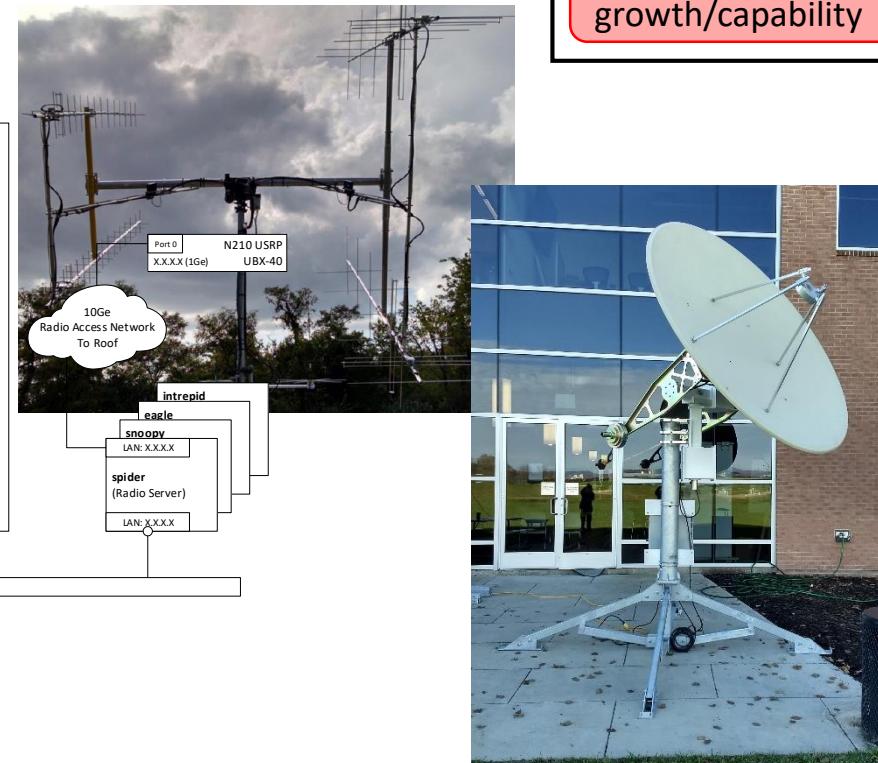
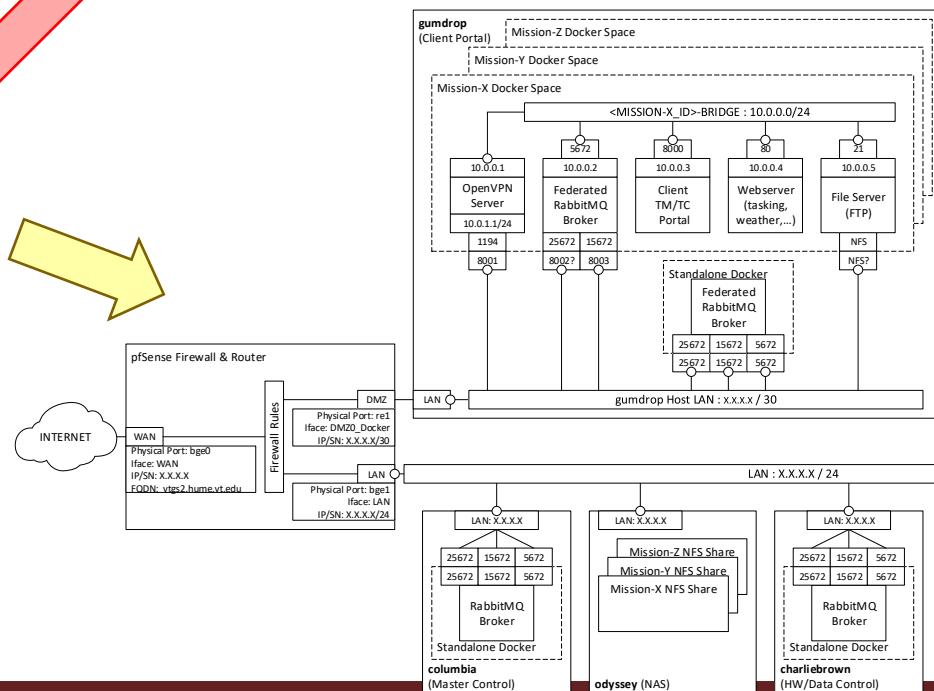
Current Capabilities



MISSION OPS

- Health and Safety Monitoring
- Command and Control

NEED: Health & safety monitoring and situational simulation



LEGEND:

Strong capabilities and/or experience

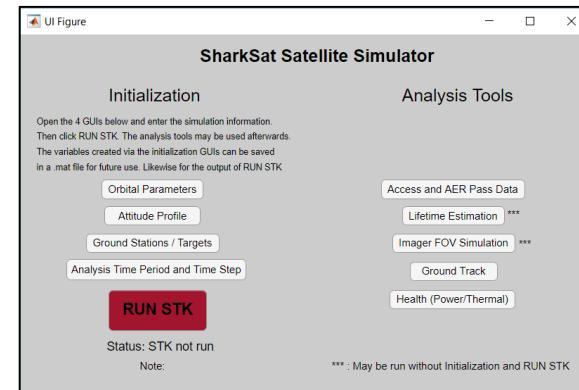
Experience - room for improvement

Need for growth/capability

Summary of Needs

HOW WE'LL ADDRESS THESE NEEDS:

NEED: Reusable, flexible mission planning resource



NEED: Health and safety monitoring and situational simulation



NEED: Reusable and scalable flight software



NEED: RF channel simulator for injecting realistic Doppler shift and path loss in satellite pass simulation



RF Channel Simulator

NEED: Central command/control and logging resource for subsystem testing

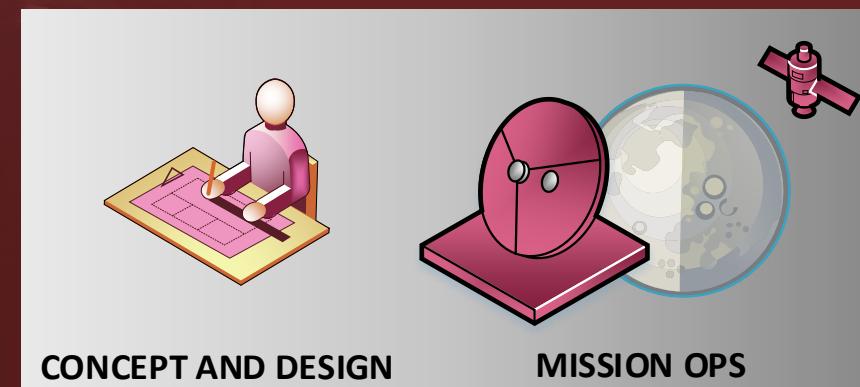




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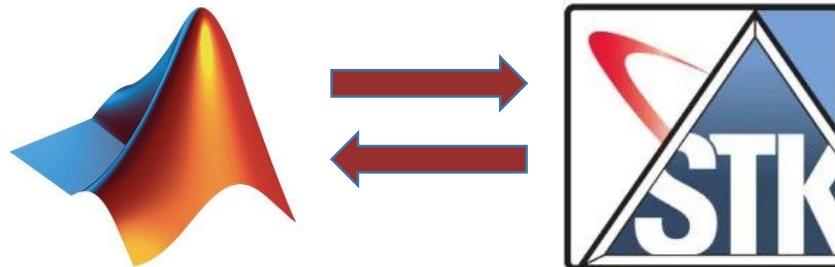
Modeling and Simulation

Jeremy Ogorzalek
Graduate Student



Modeling and Simulation

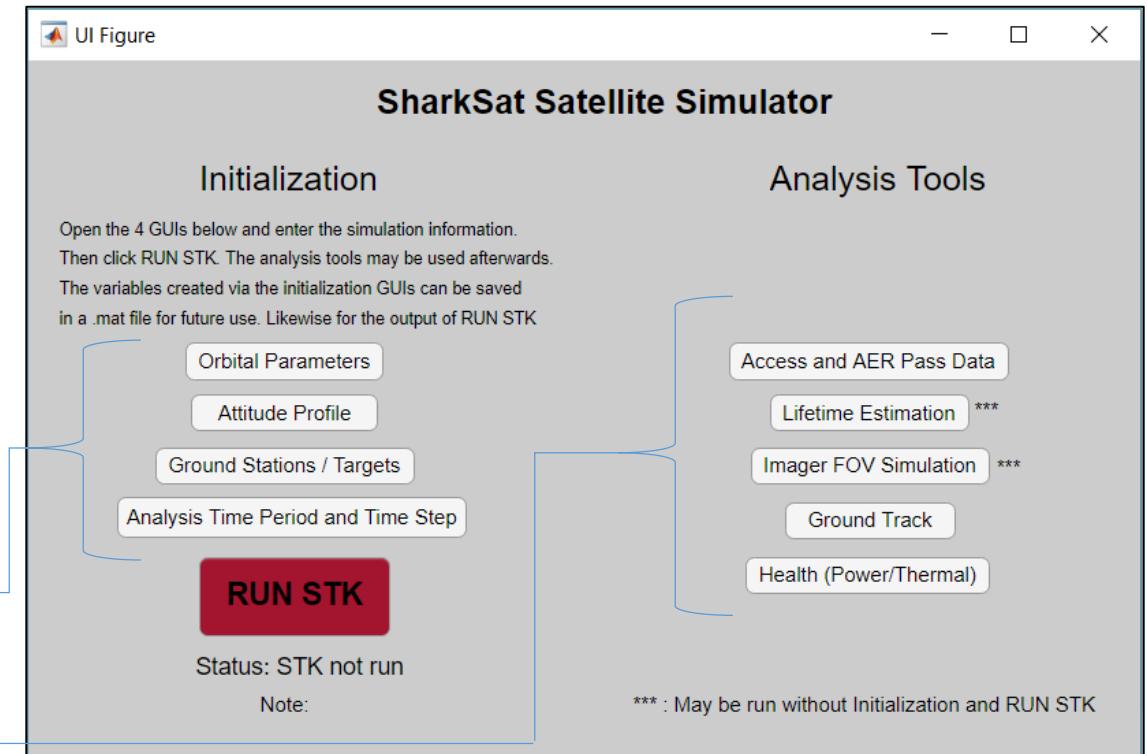
All GUI-based Matlab code that interfaces with STK



User never has to interact with command line or with STK, they simply press buttons and enter values in GUIs

- User inputs satellite and scenario properties
- A variety analysis tools are available for visualizing and understanding the health and operations of your spacecraft
- Outputs can be exported for further analysis

Main Screen:



Modeling and Simulation

- Initialize orbit with Cartesian or Keplerian elements
- Can also load and use TLE text file

UI Figure

Orbit Initialization

Initial Orbit State

Cartesian ECIF Keplerian COEs

X (km)	7000	a (km)	6793
Y (km)	0	e	0
Z (km)	0	i (deg)	51.6
Vel X (km/s)	0	Omega (deg)	0
Vel Y (km/s)	4.686	w (deg)	0
Vel Z (km/s)	5.912	v (deg)	0

Orbit Epoch

Year: 2018
Month: January
Day: 1
Hour: 0
Minutes: 0
Seconds: 0

Manually enter elements above or load TLE below

TLE File Name: Load TLE File **Enter**

Message:

Notes:

TLE .txt file must be in current directory and must be formatted correctly as specified at the top of the page here:
<https://www.celestrak.com/NORAD/documentation/tle-fmt.php>

The .txt file must include a 24 character name line as shown. If a TLE is loaded, the satellite will be propagated via SGP4 in STK. To go back to using manually entered orbit elements and HPOP in STK, close and reopen this GUI. An example of a .txt TLE file is provided and named 'TLEexample.txt'

- Select from a number of attitude profiles and declare relevant parameters from constraint angles to nutation rates

UI Figure

Attitude Profile: Option 13 Constraint Angle (deg): 0 Alignment Angle (deg): 0 Body Vector, X: 1 Y: 0 Z: 0 Spin Rate (rev/min): 3.5 Inertial Vector, X: 0 Y: 1 Z: 0 Precession Rate (rev/min): 6 Nutation Angle (deg): 20

Enter Attitude Information

Profile Descriptions

Option 1: Nadir alignment with ECF velocity constraint:
Z-face nadir, constraint angle determines velocity face/vector. At 0 deg, X-face is aligned with ECF velocity. 90 deg, Y-face. 180 deg, -X-face.

Option 2: Nadir alignment with ECI velocity constraint:
Z-face nadir, constraint angle determines velocity face/vector. At 0 deg, X-face is aligned with ECI velocity. 90 deg, Y-face. 180 deg, -X-face.

Option 3: Nadir alignment with Sun constraint:
Z-face nadir, constraint angle determines face/vector to be as aligned with Sun vector as possible given the nadir alignment. At 0 deg, X-face attempts to align to Sun. 90 deg, Y-face. 180 deg, -X-face.

Option 4: ECF velocity alignment with radial constraint:
X-face ECF velocity facing, constraint angle determines radial/zenith face/vector. At 0 deg, Z-face aligns radially. 90 deg, Y-face. 180 deg, -Z-face.

Option 5: ECF velocity alignment with nadir constraint:
X-face ECF velocity facing, constraint angle determines nadir face/vector. At 0 deg, Z-face is nadir. 90 deg, -Y-face. 180 deg, -Z-face.

Option 6: ECI velocity alignment with nadir constraint:
X-face ECI velocity facing, constraint angle determines nadir face/vector. At 0 deg, Z-face is nadir. 90 deg, -Y-face. 180 deg, -Z-face.

Option 7: ECI velocity alignment with Sun constraint:
Z-face attempts to face the sun. Alignment angle determines which face/vector is ECI velocity facing. At 0 deg, X-face is aligned with ECI velocity. 90 deg, Y-face. 180 deg, -X-face.

Option 8: Sun alignment with nadir constraint:
Z-face attempts to face nadir. Alignment angle determines which face/vector is Sun facing. At 0 deg, X-face is aligned with Sun. 90 deg, Y-face. 180 deg, -X-face.

Option 9: Yaw to nadir:
Z-face points towards inertial vector determined by cartesian x,y,z input. X-face attempts to face nadir.

Option 10: Spinning:
Body face/vector defined will be aligned with inertial face/vector defined, both by cartesian x,y,z input. The satellite will spin about these vectors, at rate defined by spin rate.

Option 11: Spin about nadir:
Z-face points nadir. Satellite will spin about this vector, at rate defined by spin rate.

Option 12: Spin about Sun:
Z-face points towards Sun. Satellite will spin about this vector, at rate defined by spin rate.

Option 13: Precessing Spin:
Satellite will spin about body vector defined by cartesian x,y,z input, at rate defined by spin rate. This body spin vector will precess about an inertial vector defined by cartesian x,y,z input, at a rate defined by precession rate. The nutation angle input defines the angle between the two vectors.

More information on STK's attitude profiles found at <http://help.agi.com/stk/11.4.0/index.htm#stk/referenceframesvehicle.htm>

Modeling and Simulation

- Specify a ground station, as well as up to 5 targets by their latitude, longitude, and altitude
- Ground station and targets can have different access elevation constraints

UI Figure

Ground Stations and Targets

Ground Station		Targets		
		Lat	Long	Alt (m)
Lat (deg)	37.23	58	-20	300
Long (deg)	-80.41	59.3	33	135
Alt (m)	634	0	0	0
Minimum elevation for access to ground station (deg)	0	0	0	0
Minimum elevation for access to targets (deg)	0	0	0	0
Time Step for Access/Passes Data (sec)	1	0	0	0

Enter

UI Figure

Analysis Time Period and Time Step

Scenario Start Time		Scenario End Time		Scenario Duration
Year, Start	2018	Year, End	2018	
Month, Start	January	Month, End	January	
Day, Start	1	Day, End	2	Day
Hour, Start	0	Hour, End	0	Hour
Minutes, Start	0	Minutes, End	0	Minutes
Seconds, Start	0	Seconds, End	0	Seconds

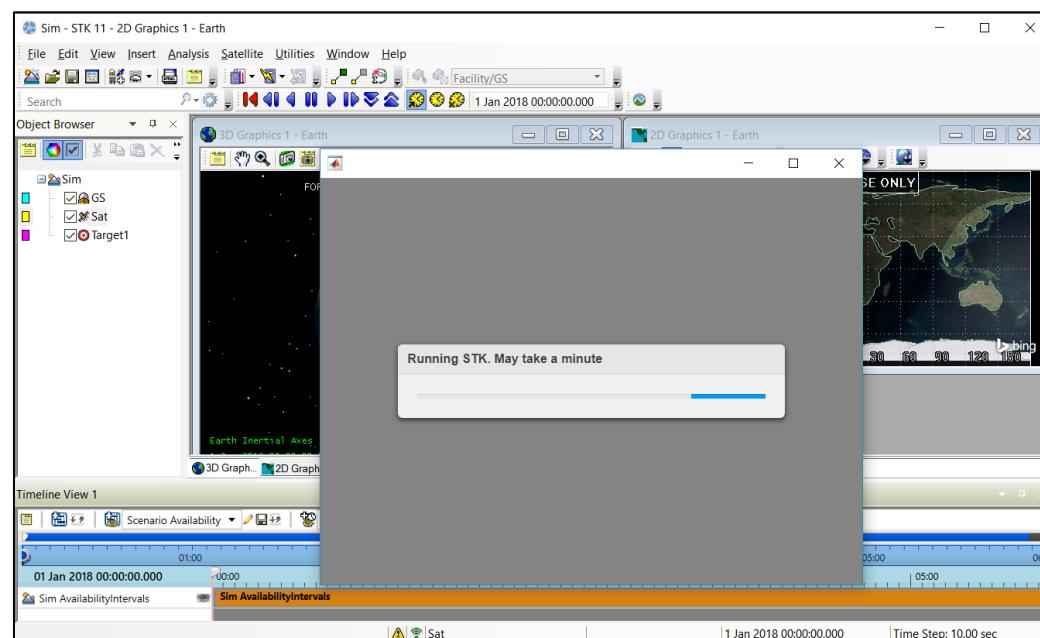
Time Step (s) 60

Note: This time step determines granularity of power and thermal history

Enter

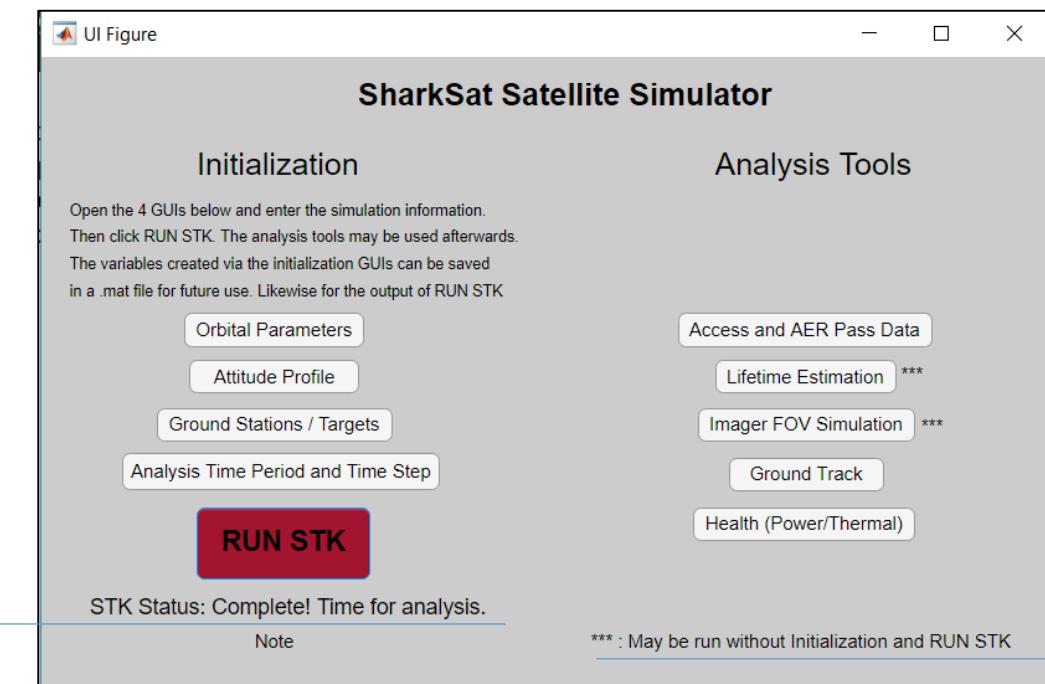
Modeling and Simulation

- After all initialization parameters have been input, STK can be run with the push of a button
- From STK, Matlab receives mission geometry (vectors between satellite, Sun, and Earth, in several coordinate systems) and access information



- Alternatively, all initialization parameters an/or the output from STK can be stored as an .mat Matlab data file and loaded at a later time to avoid having to repeat the process

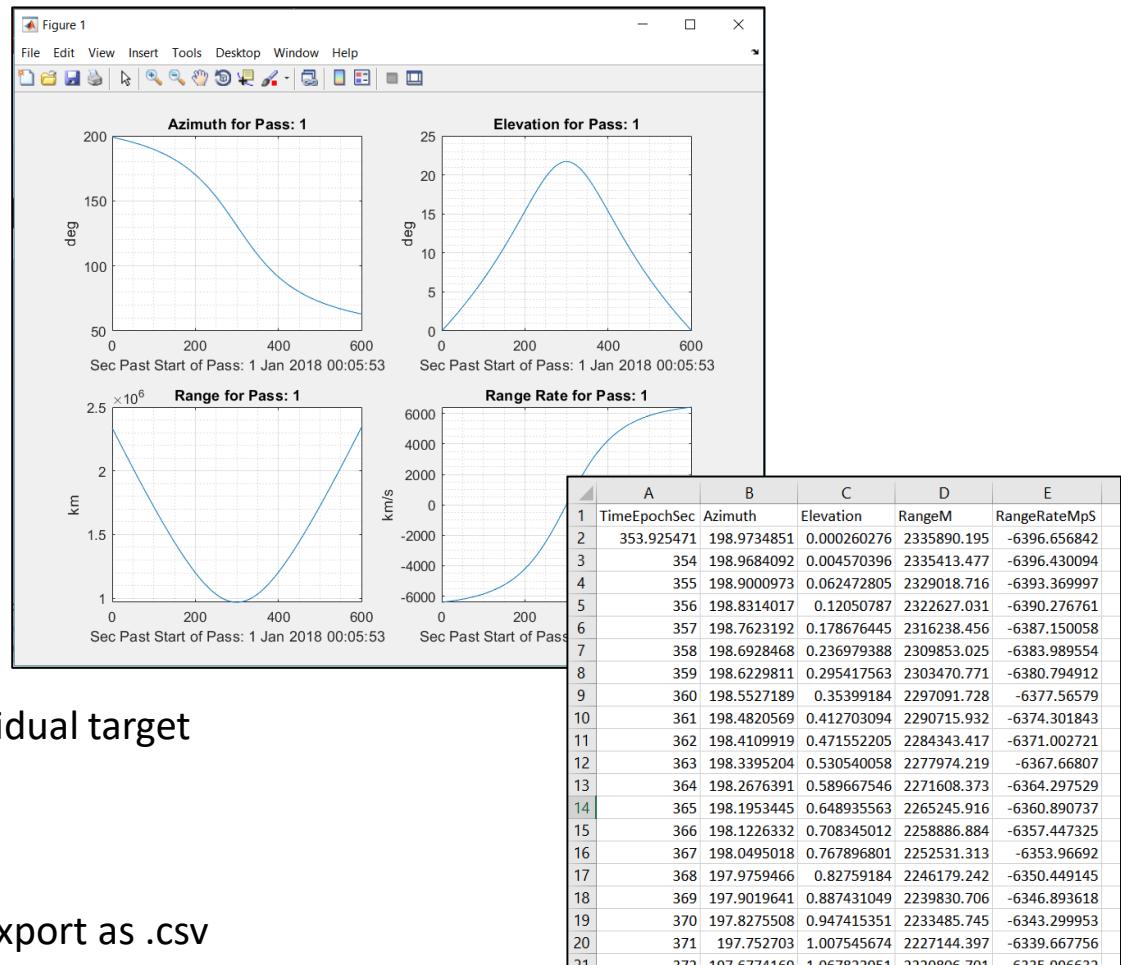
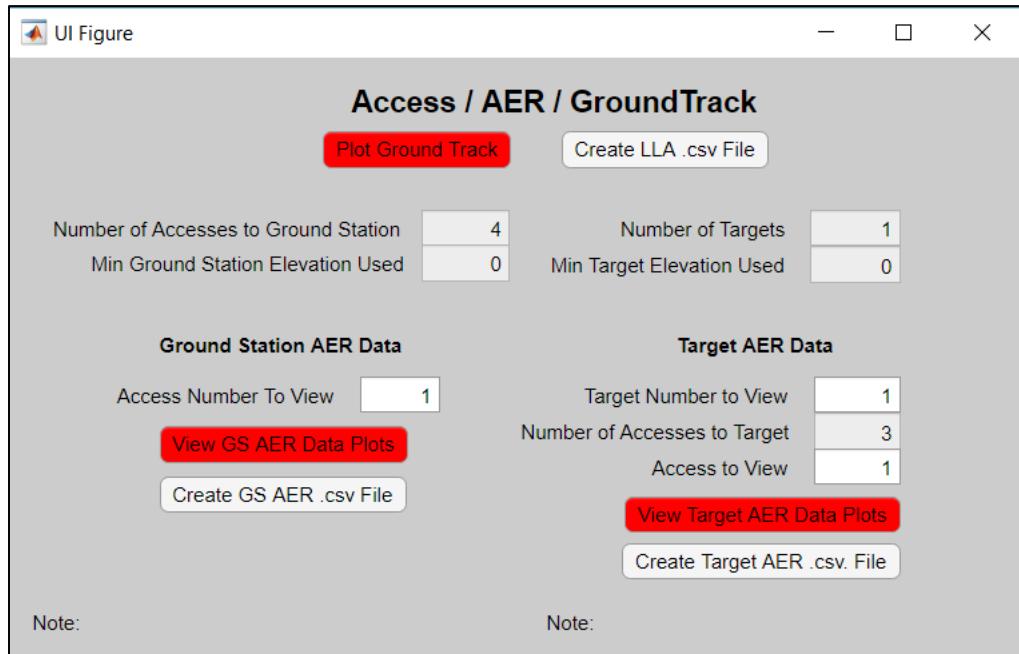
- Once STK is done running (or inputs/outputs from previous run are loaded from .mat file), the analysis tools can be used



- Note that some of the tools can be used without initialization and/or running STK, but the user will need to supply some information

Modeling and Simulation

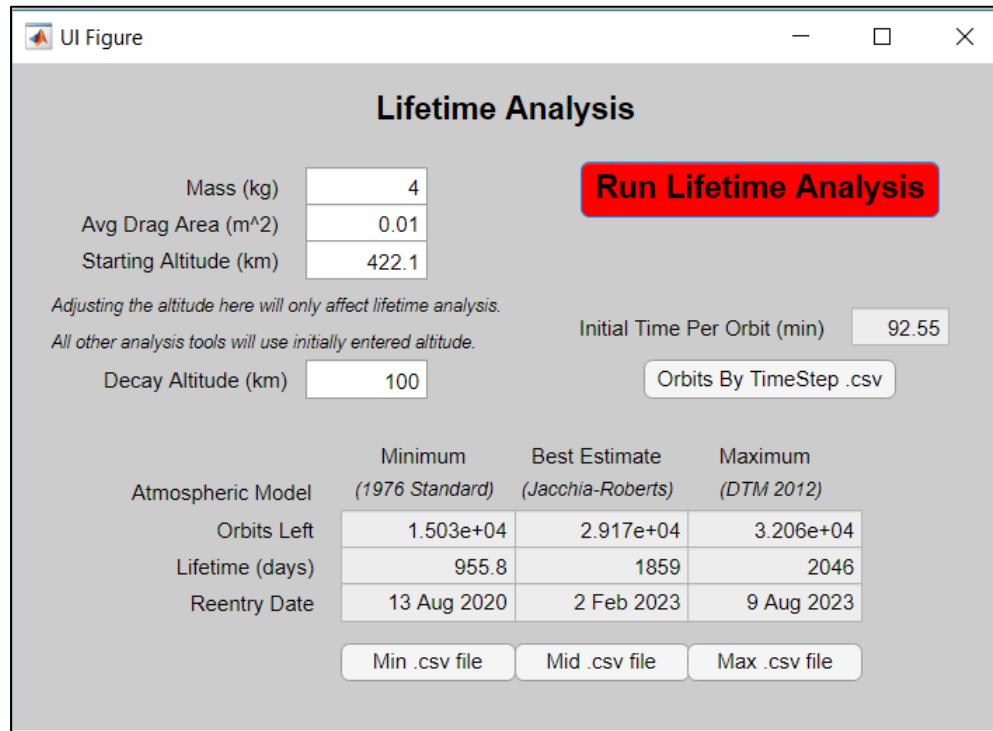
Analysis Tool: Access, Azimuth, Elevation, Range for Passes



- Displays number of accesses to the ground station as well as to each individual target
- User selects which access to analyze (unable to select an invalid pass)
- Can plot Azimuth, Elevation, Range, and Range rate for selected pass, or export as .csv

Modeling and Simulation

Analysis Tool: Lifetime Estimation



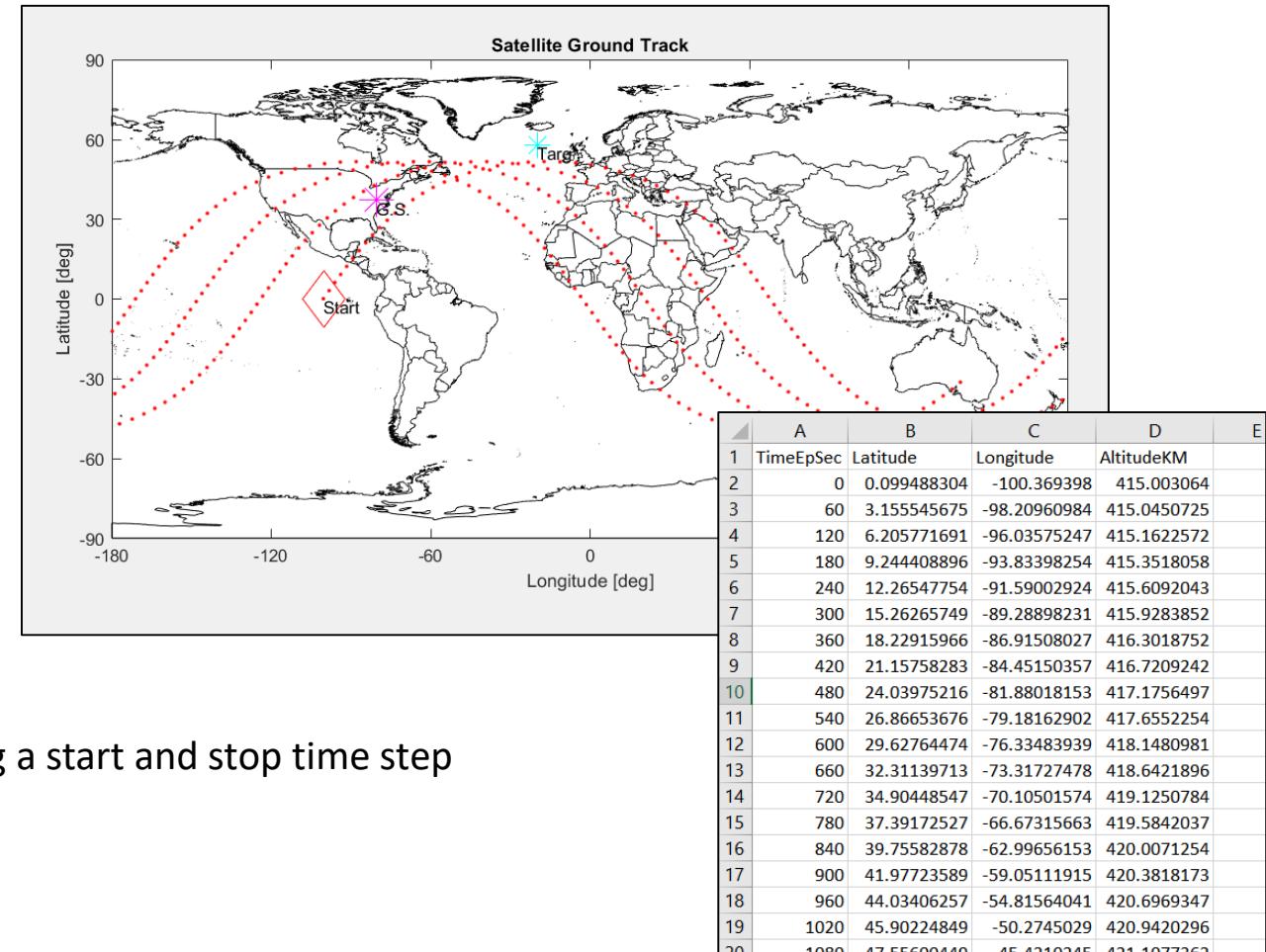
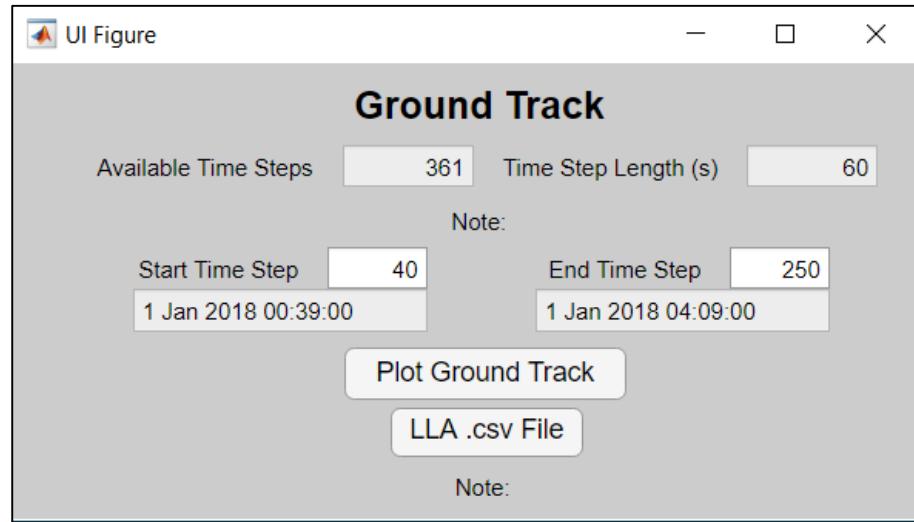
- User sets Mass, Drag Area, and Decay Altitude threshold
- Starting altitude is automatically imported from Orbital Parameters (but can be changed by the user to compare the difference in results)
- 'Run Lifetime Analysis' runs STK and calculates lifetime data using three separate atmospheric models
- Data can be exported in two formats: by orbit, and by time step

A	B	C	D
1	TimeUTCG	TimeEpSec	Orbits
2	1/1/2018 0:46	2783.723947	0
3	1/1/2018 2:18	8336.779515	1
4	1/1/2018 3:51	13889.83419	2
5	1/1/2018 5:24	19442.88714	3
6	1/1/2018 6:56	24995.93836	4
7	1/1/2018 8:29	30548.98786	5
8	1/1/2018 10:01	36102.03564	6
9	1/1/2018 11:34	41655.08168	7
10	1/1/2018 13:06	47208.126	8
11	1/1/2018 14:39	52761.16859	9
12	1/1/2018 16:11	58314.20946	10
13	1/1/2018 17:44	63867.24859	11
14	1/1/2018 19:17	69420.28598	12
15	1/1/2018 20:49	74973.32165	13
16	1/1/2018 22:22	80526.35558	14
17	1/1/2018 23:54	86079.38777	15
18	1/2/2018 1:27	91632.41823	16
19	1/2/2018 2:59	97185.44695	17
20	1/2/2018 4:32	102738.4739	18
21	1/2/2018 6:04	108291.4992	19
22	1/2/2018 7:37	113844.5227	20

A	B
1	TimeEpSec
2	OrbitsAtTimeStep
3	0.010767985
4	0.021535969
5	0.032303954
6	0.043071938
7	0.053839923
8	0.064607907
9	0.075375892
10	0.086143876
11	0.096911861
12	0.107679845
13	0.11844783
14	0.129215814
15	0.139983799
16	0.150751783
17	0.161519768
18	0.172287752
19	0.183055737
20	0.193823721
21	0.204501706

Modeling and Simulation

Analysis Tool: Ground Track



- Can plot and export data for entire scenario time period
- Alternatively, can select specific period to analyze by selecting a start and stop time step

Modeling and Simulation

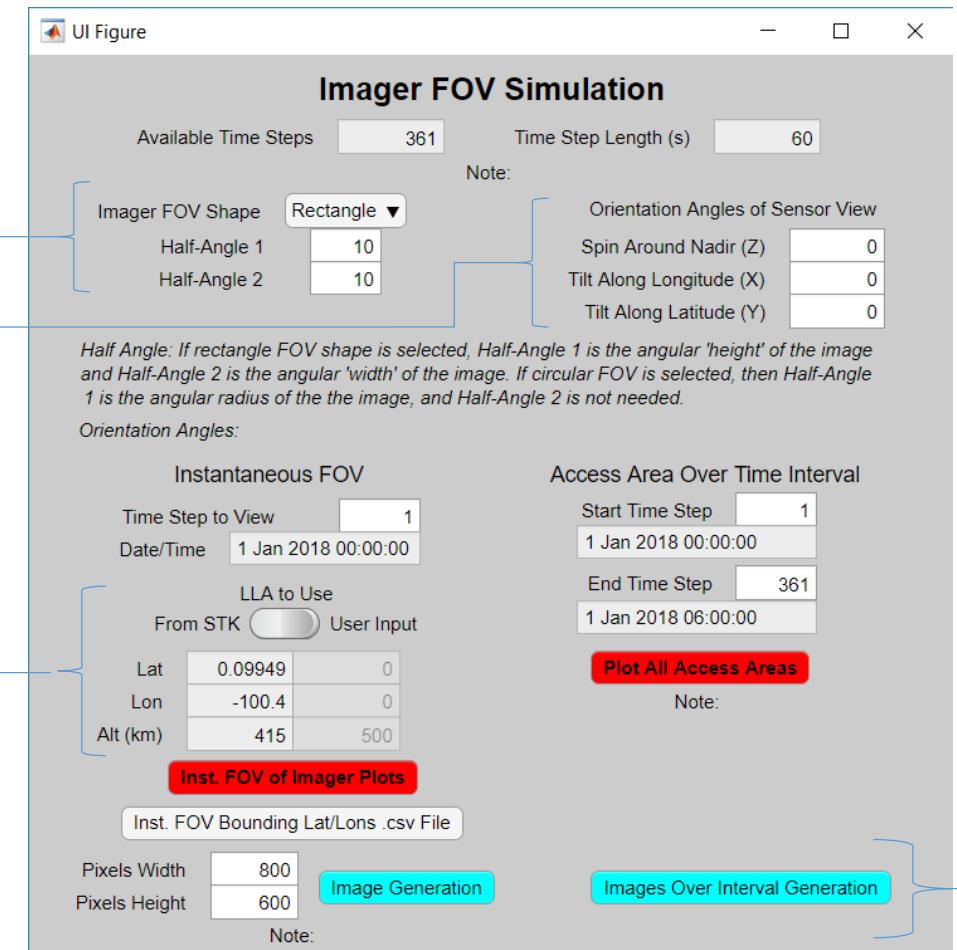
Analysis Tool: Imager Simulation and Image Generation

- User defines imager shape and FOV

- User defines imager boresight orientation via three Euler angles

- Selecting a time step will automatically load the associated lat, lon, alt, but user can alternatively supply custom values

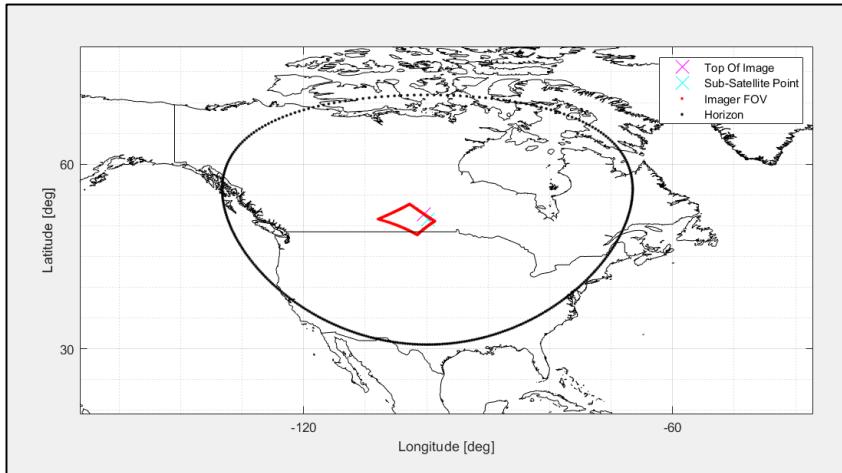
- 2D and 3D visualization of imager FOV can be generated for both one instantaneous time or over a time interval



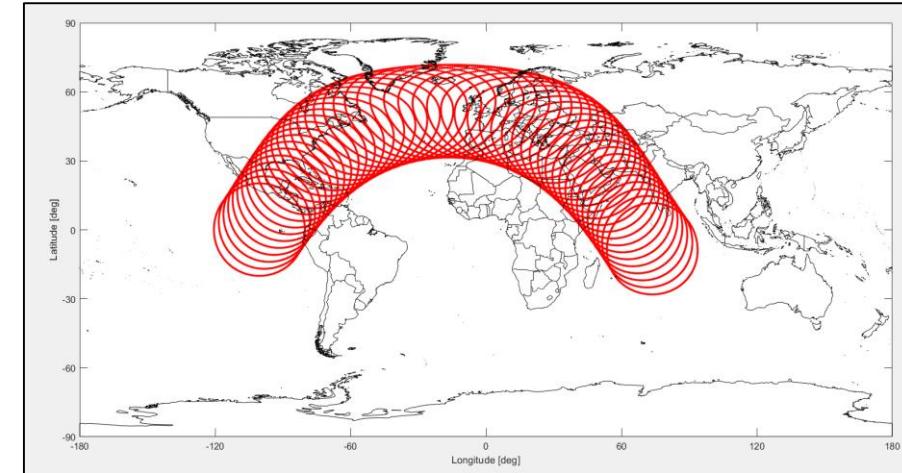
- Given pixel dimensions, realistic images can be generated via STK

Modeling and Simulation

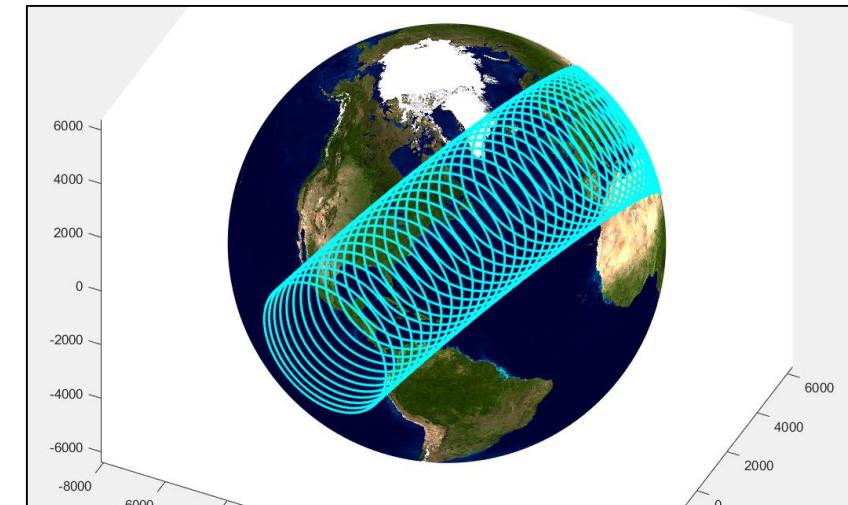
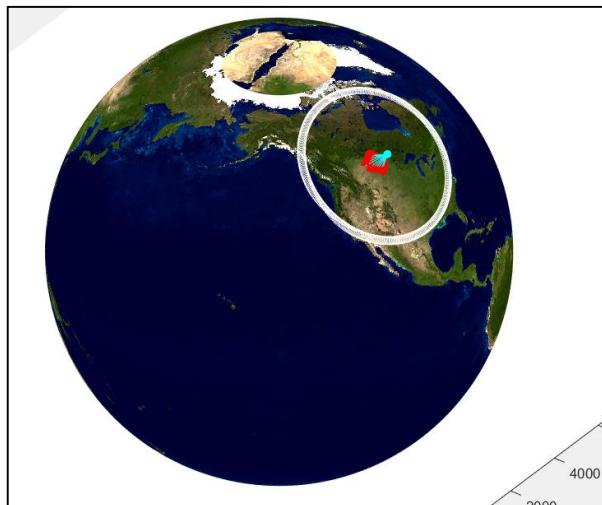
Instantaneous Imager FOV and Access Area



Time Interval Access Area



3D



Modeling and Simulation

Simulated Imager Data



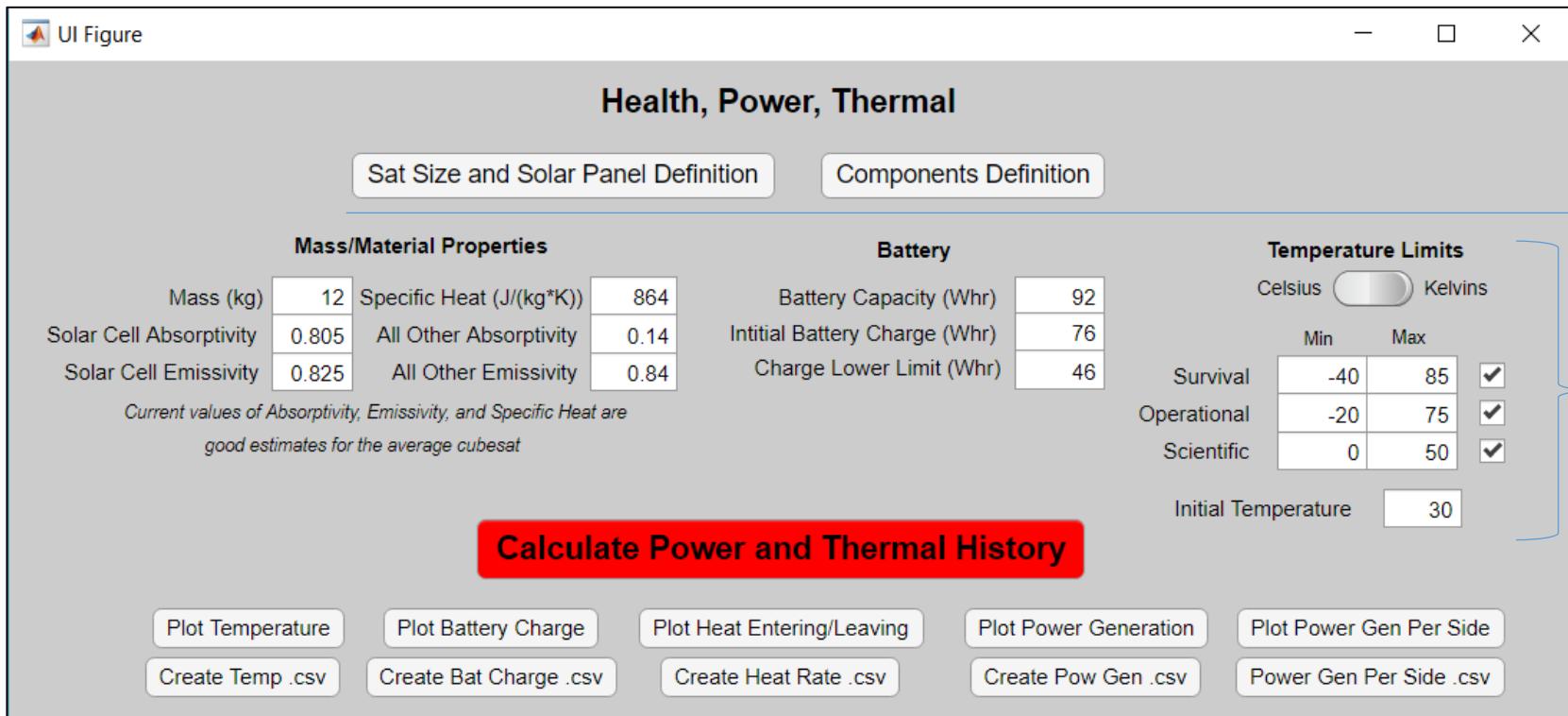
LLA: [37, 81, 400km], Euler Angles: [30°, 0, 0]



LLA: [37, 81, 400km], Euler Angles: [70°, 0, 180°]

Modeling and Simulation

Analysis Tool: Health, Power, and Thermal

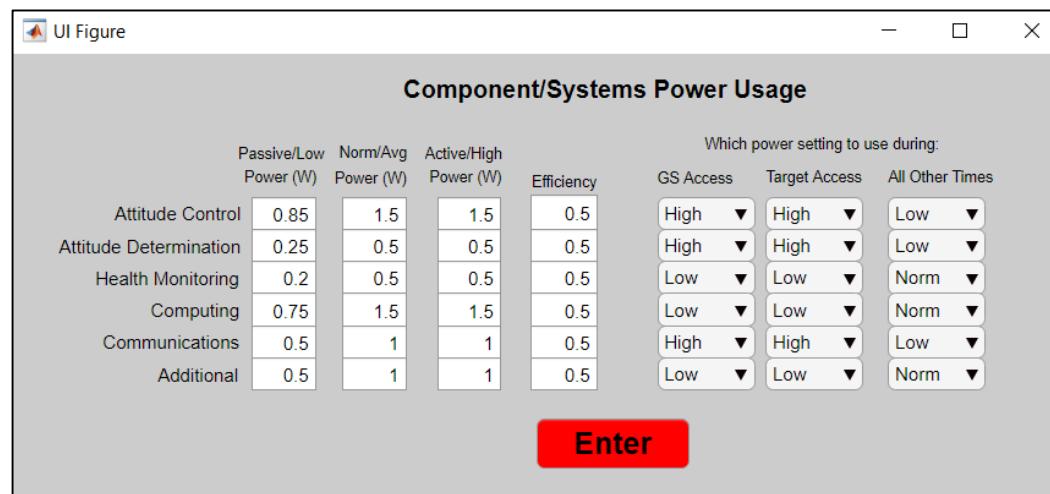
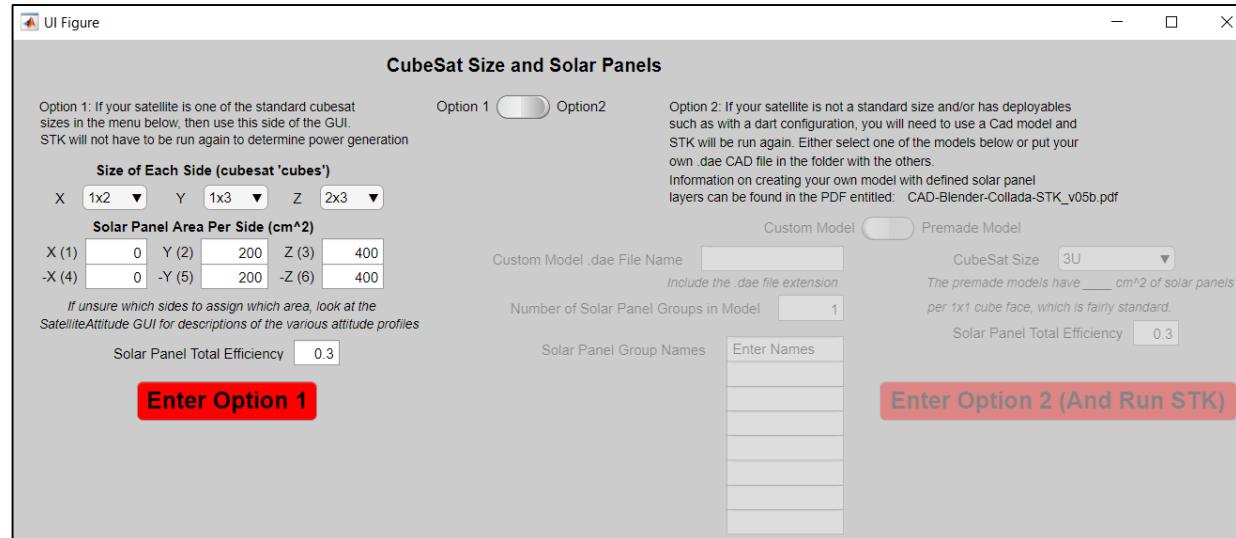


- Two other GUI's are opened to define size and solar panels, as well as component power usage profiles

- User inputs material properties, as well as battery and temperature limit information

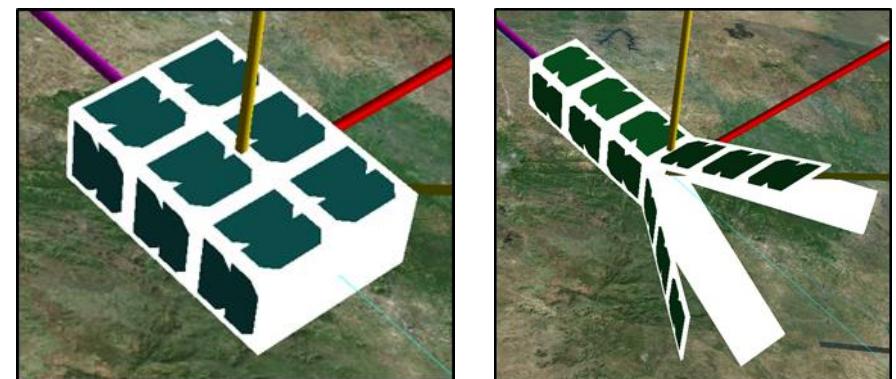
- Once all properties are set, and Calculate Power and Thermal History is pressed, various data can be plotted and/or exported to a .csv file

Modeling and Simulation



- Satellite size, shape, and solar panel coverage can be defined manually

- Alternatively, a CAD model (either custom or one of the standard provided models) can be imported and analyzed in STK

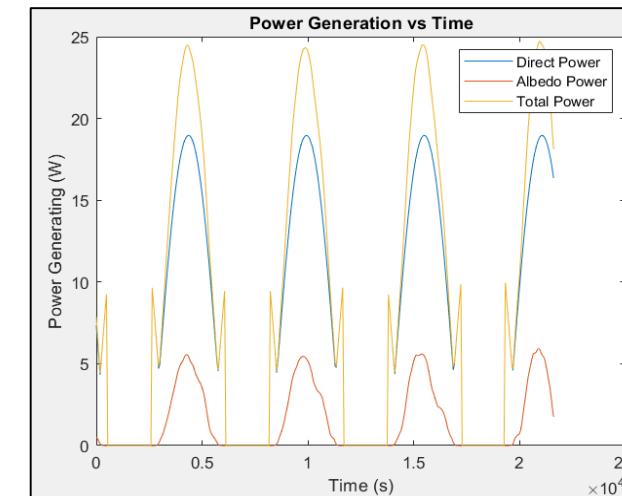
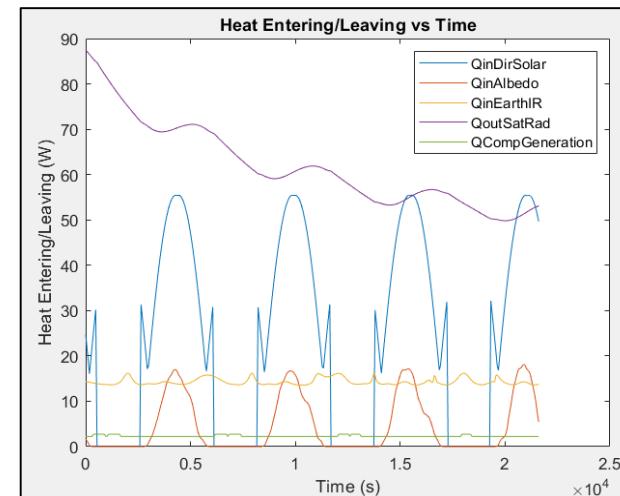
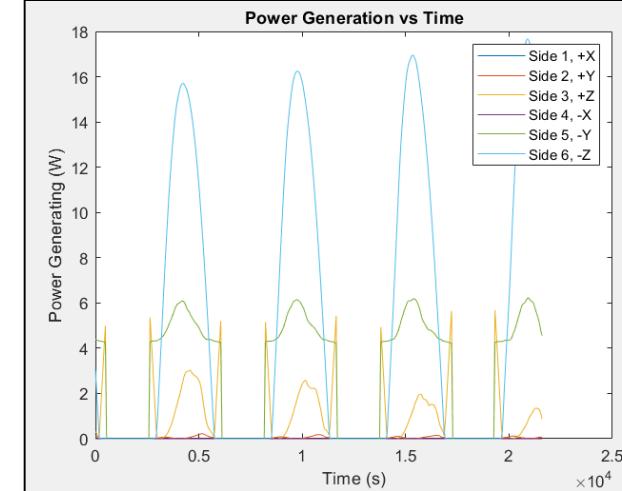
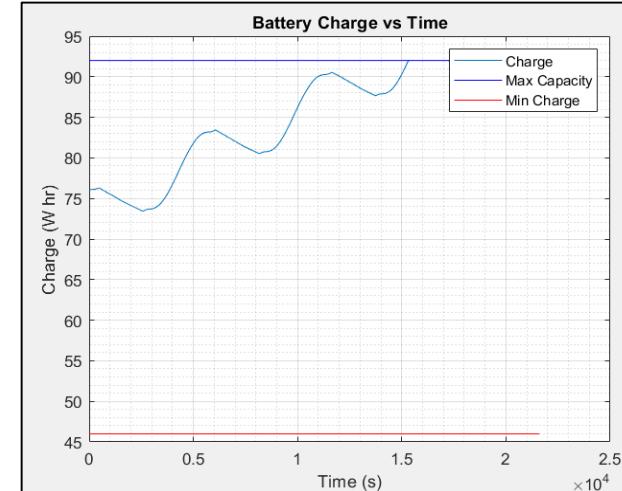
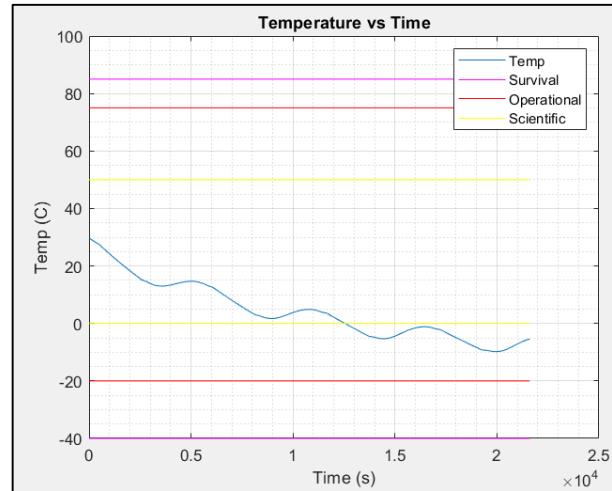


- For a variety of common satellite components, various power levels and efficiency can be entered

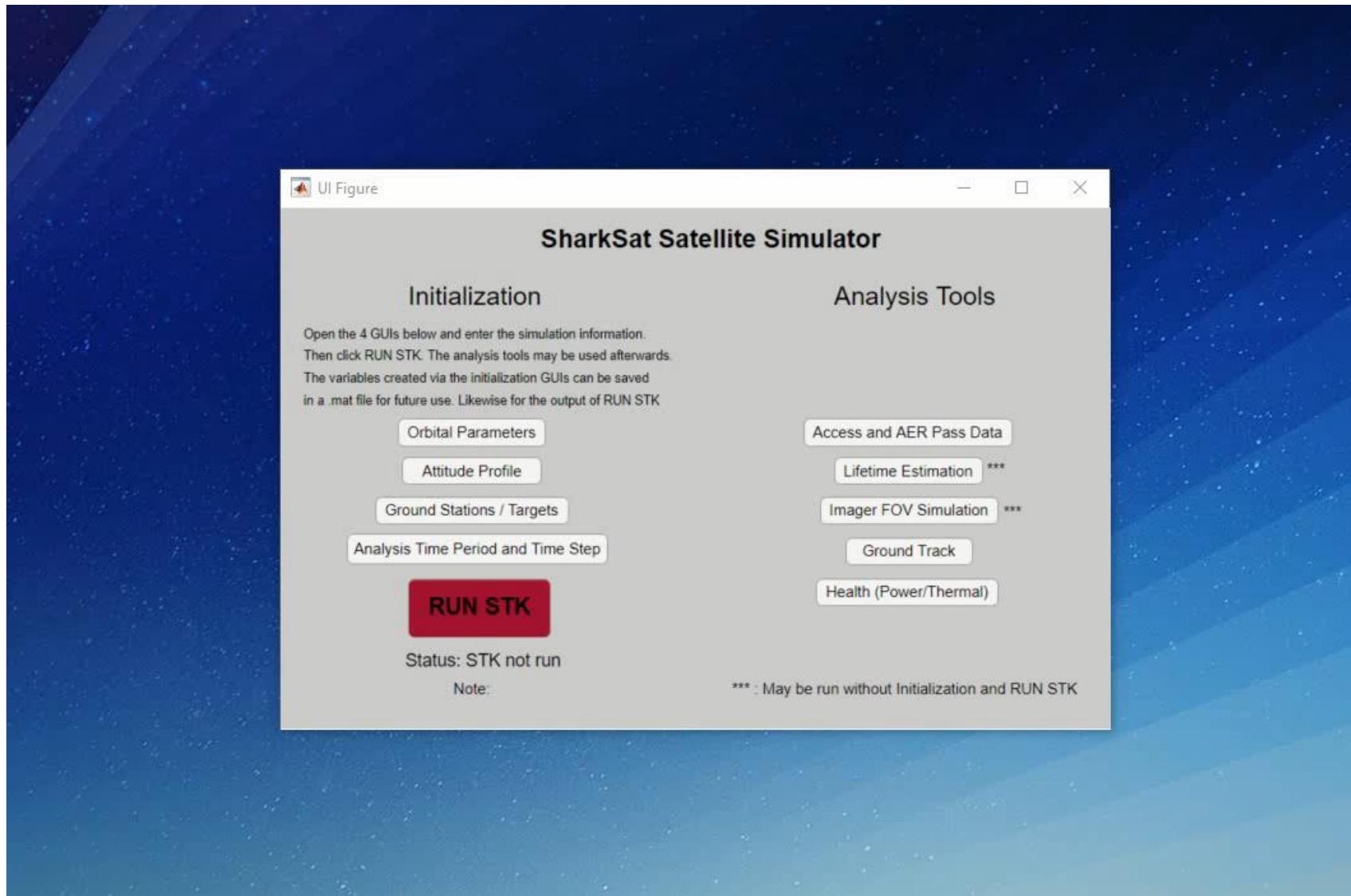
- User can determine which power level is used at what time depending on access to ground station and targets

Modeling and Simulation

Example Plots from Health, Thermal, Power Tool



Demonstration Video



- Continue to add functionality and analysis tools, including:
 - Determining percentage of Earth coverage over a given time period
 - Taking series of photos over a given time period
 - Ability to use attitude history from STK in imager simulation
 - More error handling / warning features
- Create more standard cubesat configuration CAD models to be used in simulator
- Have it used and tested to find bugs and get feedback on improvements
 - Add additional relevant science mission evaluation modules



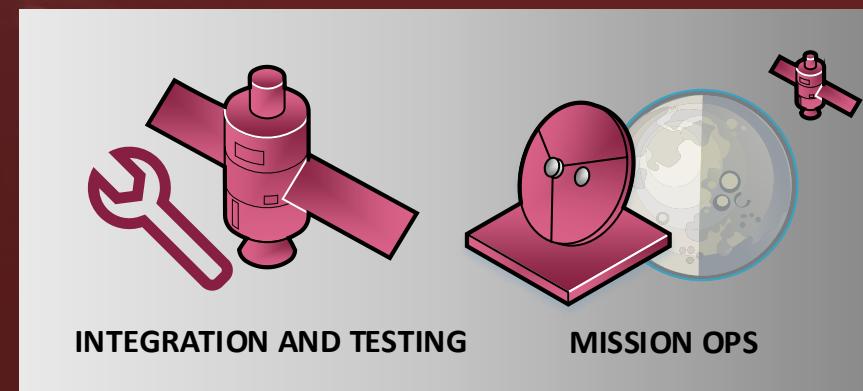
VIRGINIA TECH™

A photograph of a satellite in orbit around Earth. The satellite has two large blue solar panels deployed. It is positioned on the left side of the slide, with the Earth's horizon visible in the background. The sky is a deep red/orange color.

NASA core Flight System

Josh Smoot

Graduate Student



- Software framework for flight projects and embedded systems
- Platform and project independence
 - Runs on Linux, RTEMS, and vxWorks 6
 - core Flight System (cFS) applications are reusable between varying hardware
- Requires more computational resources than typically available on low power microcontrollers
- Applications can be developed in a desktop environment and easily be ported to flight computer without modification



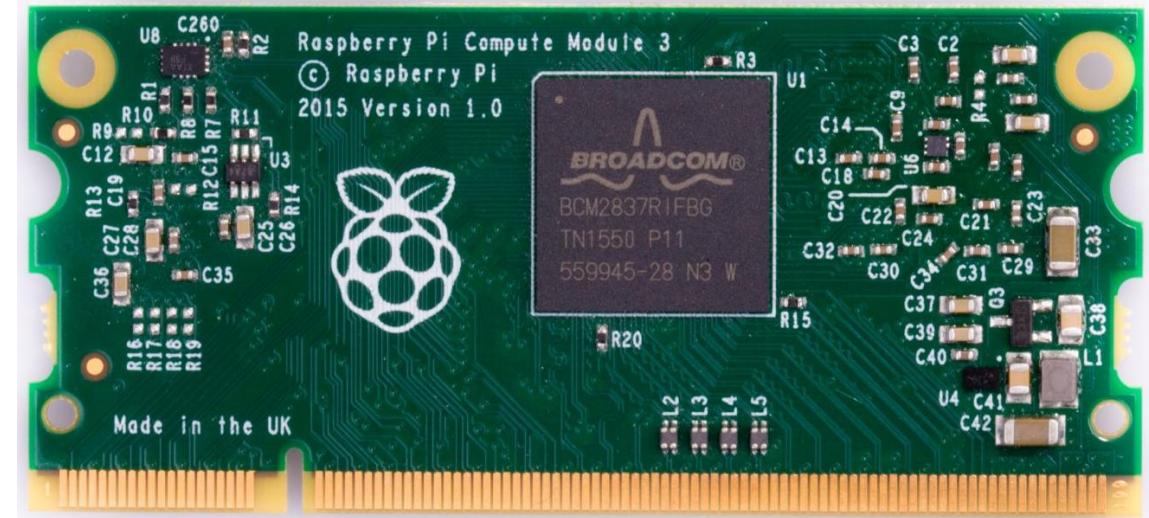
Source: <https://coreflightsystem.org>

- cFS consists of four layers of software
 - Operating System Abstraction Layer (OSAL)
 - Platform Support Package (PSP) layer
 - core Flight Executive (cFE) layer
 - Applications layer
- OSAL and PSP are configured such that cFE and applications run identically on varying hardware and OS
 - Board support packages contained in OSAL can be built for most systems
 - Applications can be developed for one flight computer and then reused for a mission with similar needs utilizing different hardware



core Flight System on Raspberry Pi

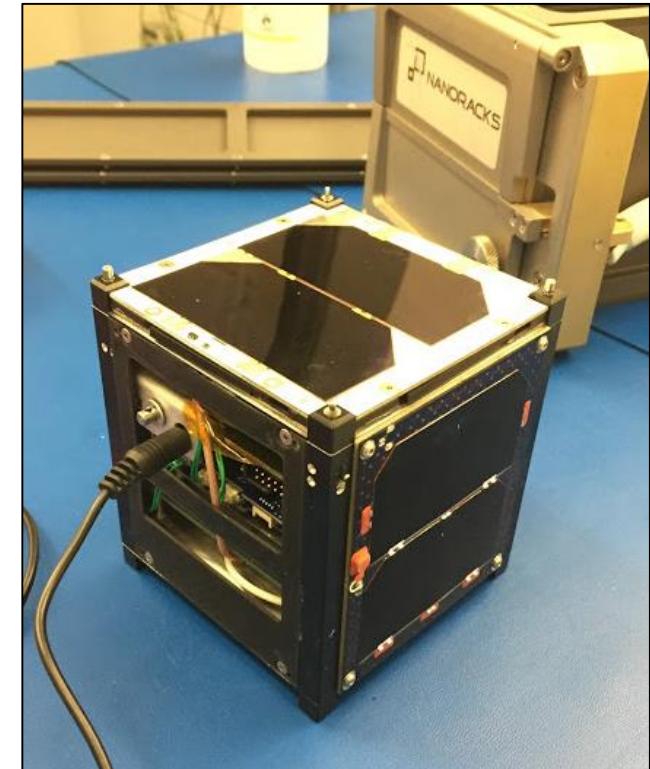
- Raspberry Pi (RPi) boards are low cost and have sufficient resources to run linux and cFS
 - Peripherals can be easily connected
- RPi comes in multiple form factors
 - Development on standard Model 3B+ boards
 - Deployment on the Compute Module 3
- cFS runs on RPi with slight modifications to NASA OSAL and PSP distributions
- Image of RPi with cFS build can be cloned for multiple students to develop applications simultaneously



Source: <https://www.raspberrypi.org/products/compute-module-3/>

core Flight System Comparison

	NASA core Flight System	Virginia Cubesat Constellation Flight Software, developed at Space@VT
Hardware	Runs on many systems, x86 and ARM	Developed for MSP430 microcontroller onboard 1U cubesat
Operating Systems	Multi platform: Linux, RTEMS, and vxWorks 6	Includes real time operating system in build
Applications	Large cFS codebase, applications can be made for specific purpose and reused	Drivers for new components can be easily integrated into flight software
Portability	Applications developed for one mission can be easily reused on any machine with OSAL and PSP implemented	Development required to implement VCC code on another system



Future Work with core Flight System



- FlatSat testing environment
 - Set up multiple benchtops with hardware emulating what is typically used for cubesat missions with cFS implemented
 - Applications to operate a mission's flight components can be developed and tested in the FlatSat environment and then easily ported to mission hardware
- Interfacing cFS on RPi with ground system to send and receive telemetry
 - NASA ASIST or COSMOS
- cFS deployment on high altitude balloon flight or cubesat mission



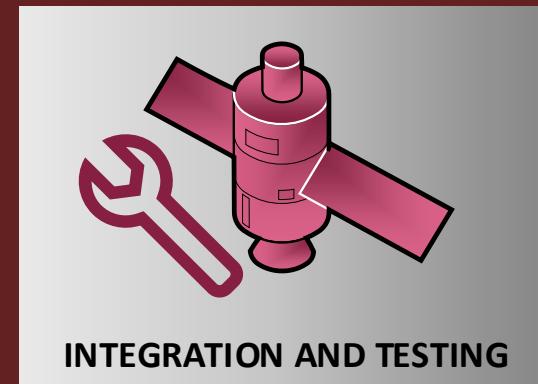
VIRGINIA TECH™



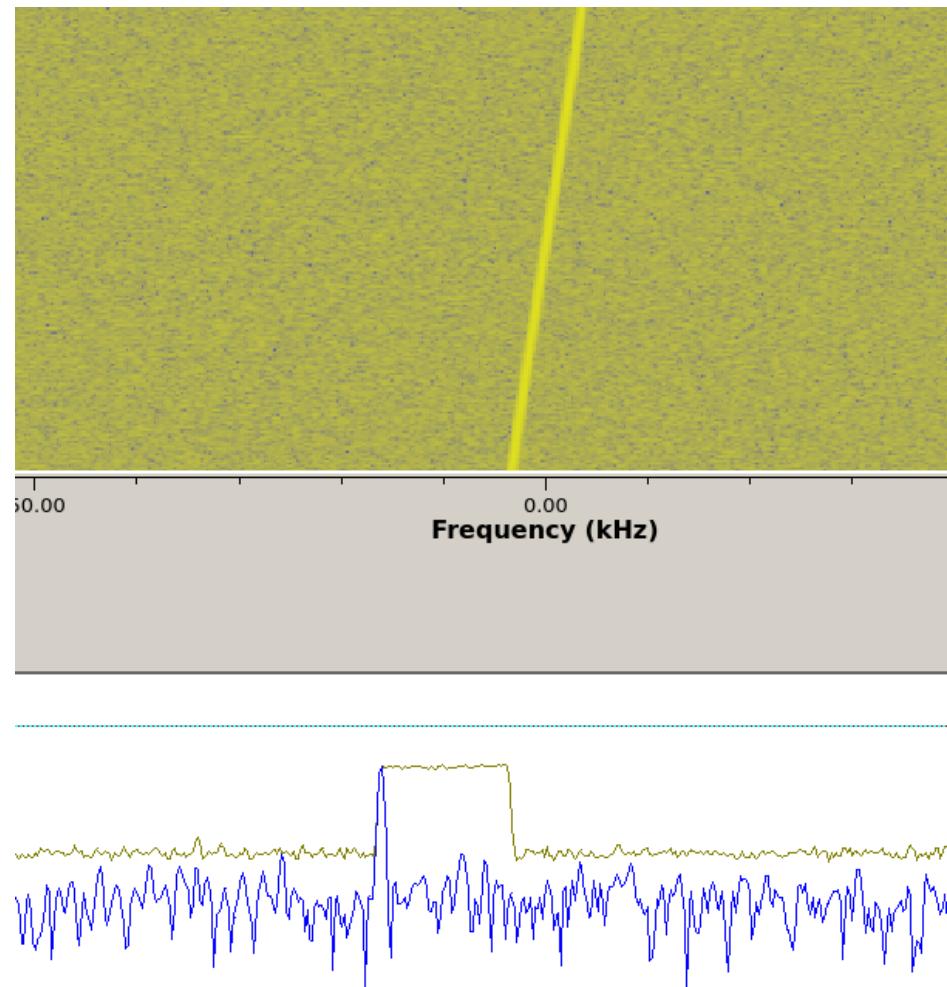
RF Channel Simulator

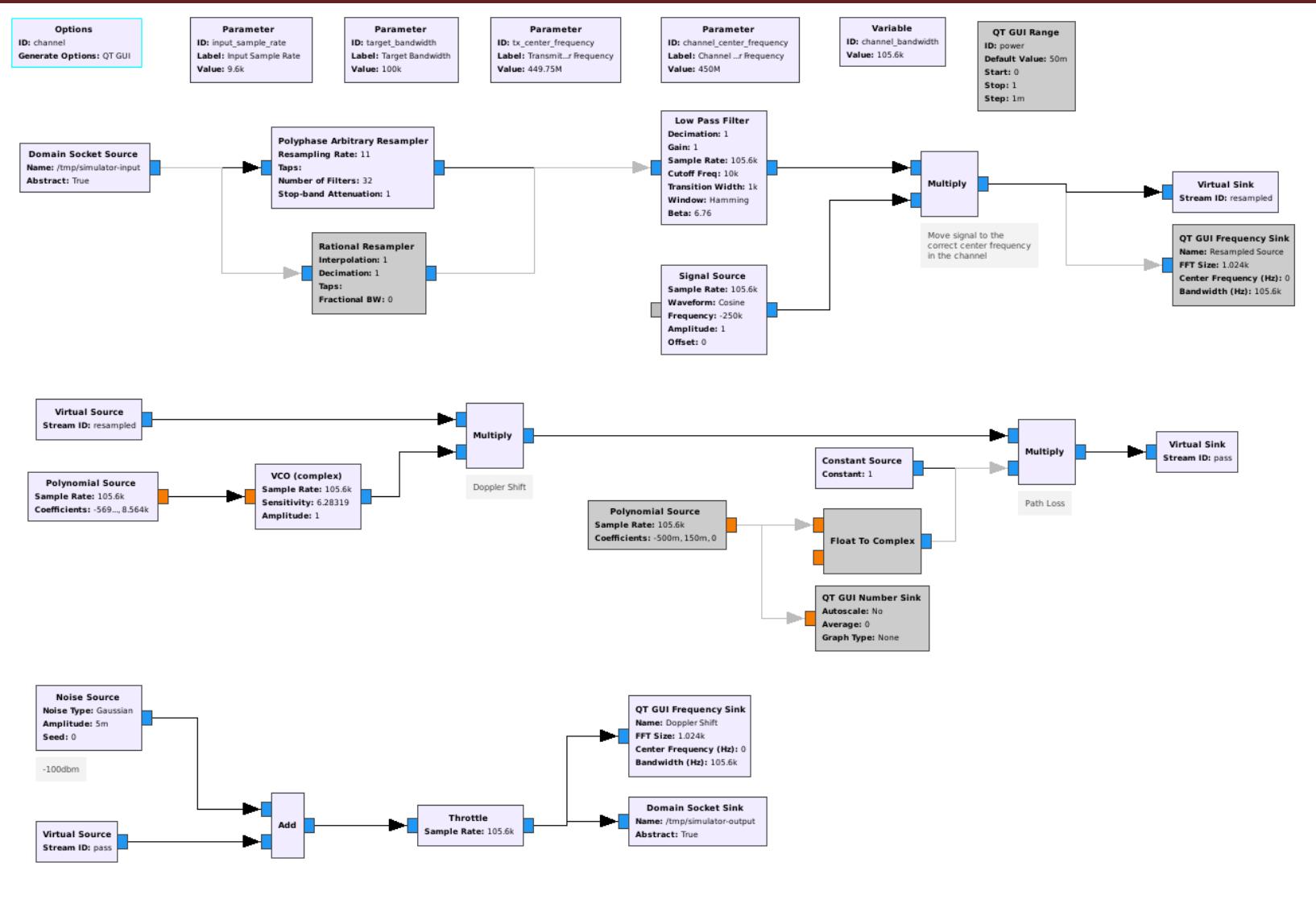
Seth Hitefield

Graduate Student



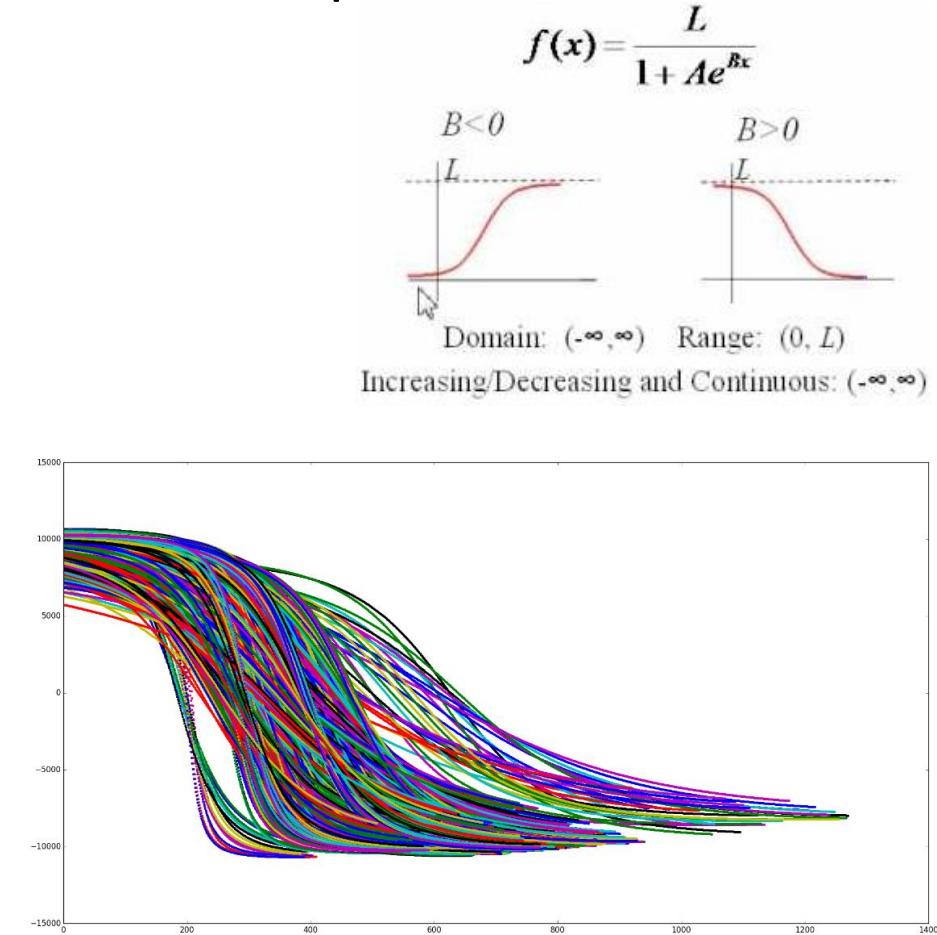
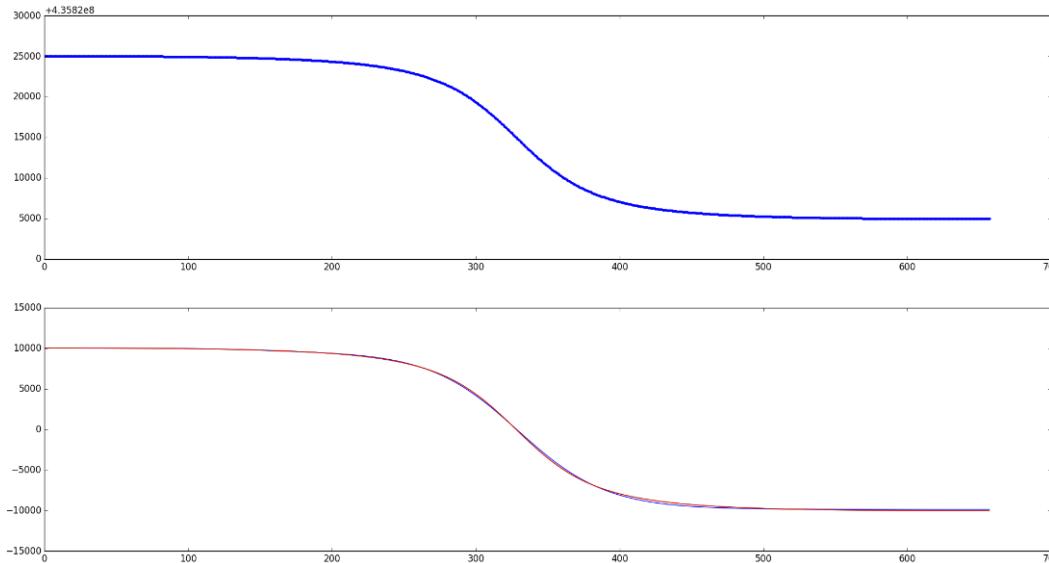
- GNU Radio based channel simulator
 - Simulates RF channels for different satellites/passes
 - All software defined or hardware in the loop
 - Uses TLEs to generate estimated doppler shift for selected pass or uses external doppler input
 - Data can be fitted to Logistical curve for smooth shift
 - Created several new GR blocks for per-sample simulation of path loss and doppler shift for the pass
 - Virtual hardware blocks for interfacing between the transmitter and receiver flowgraphs and channel simulator



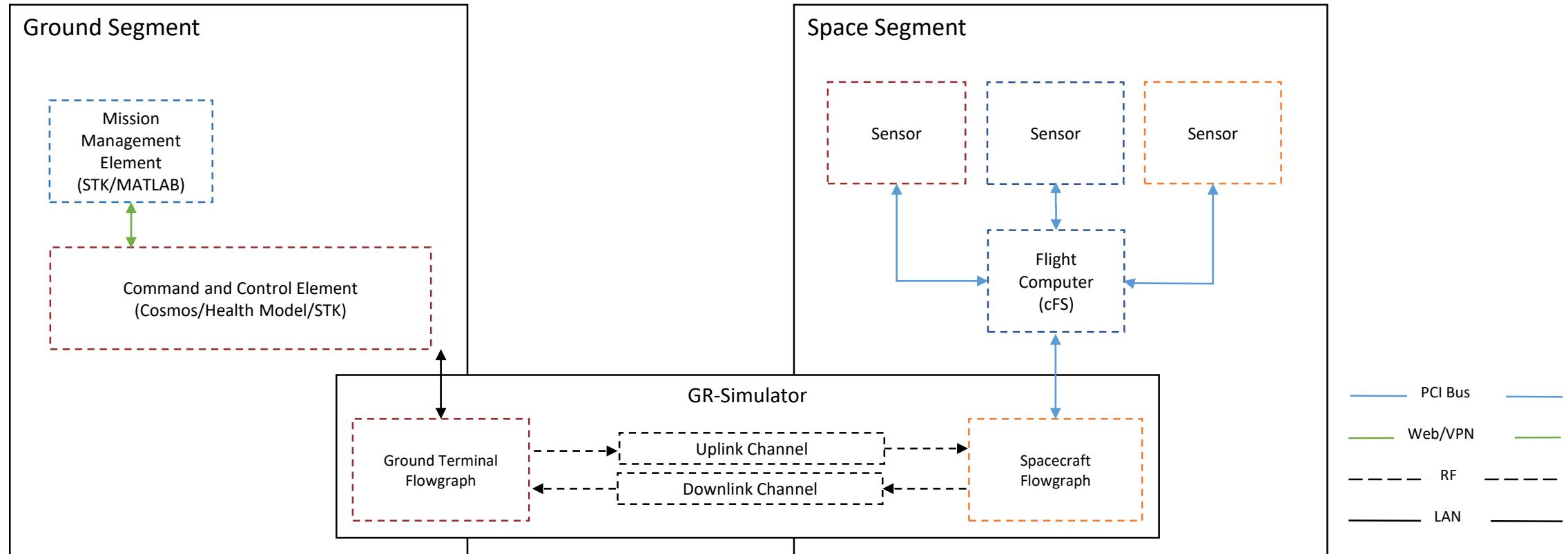


- Simulation of the Doppler shift and path loss for an orbital pass

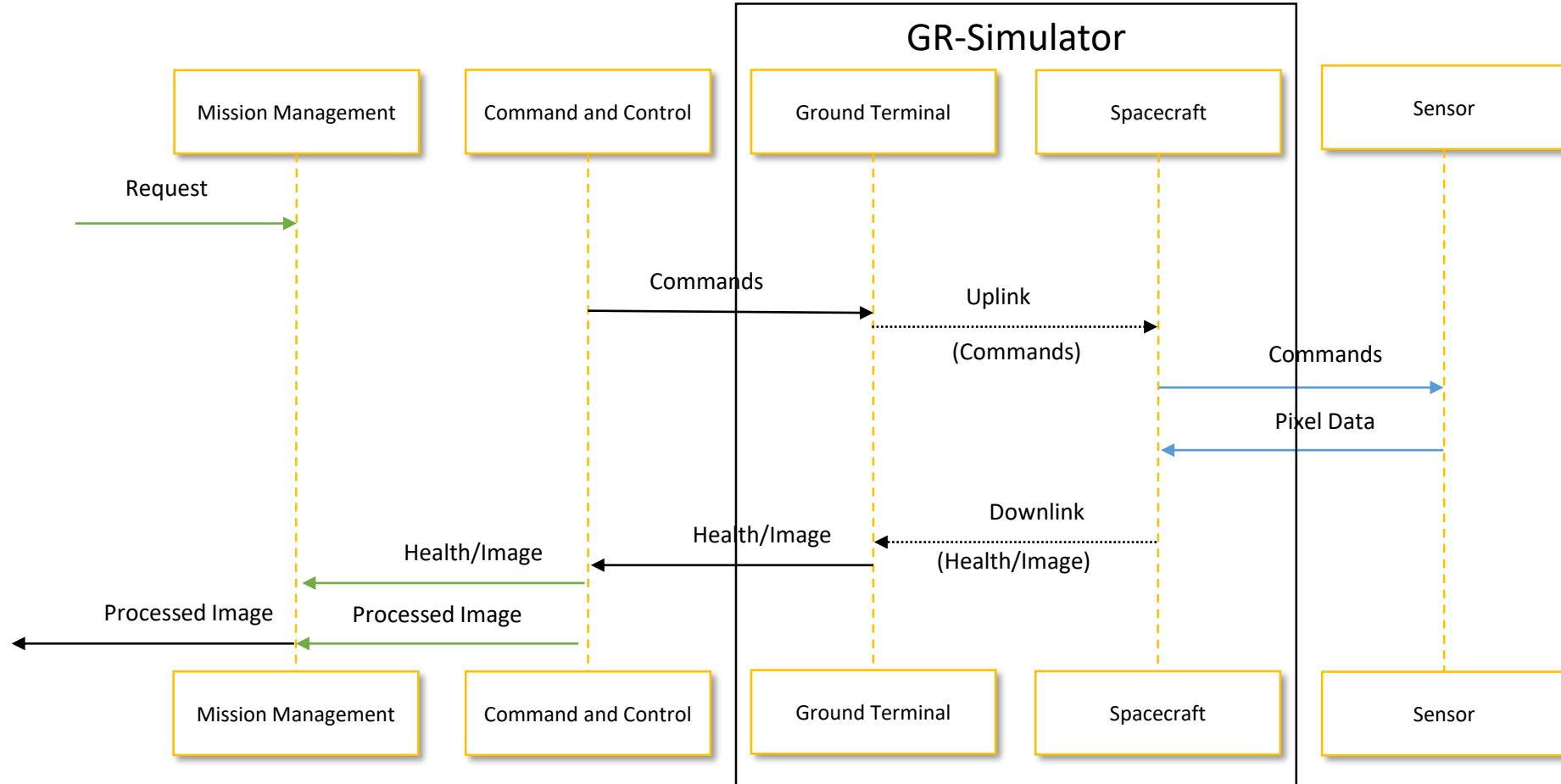
- Logistical functions
- Curve fitting generated from 1 second time steps
- Smooth (continuous) shift over the entire pass



Representative Mission System Diagram



Timeline Diagram



- Add a user interface for controlling the simulator
 - Allows user to select specific satellite/pass and visualize channel
- Setup the simulator for handling over-the-air testing on a test bench
- Ability to schedule different passes and execute on demand

Validate with HIL testing using flatsat, ground station, and cloud computing

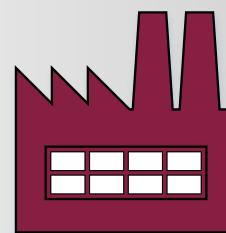


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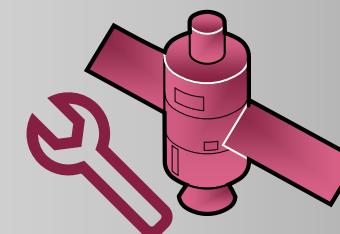


COSMOS

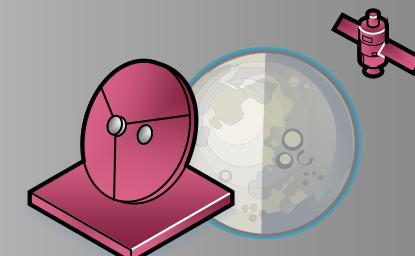
Gavin Brown
Undergraduate Student



PLANNING & FABRICATION



INTEGRATION AND TESTING



MISSION OPS



- Open source software by Ball Aerospace.
- A command and control system for test and operations made up of 15 customizable applications.
- Can:
 - Send commands
 - Visualize & extract data
 - Write automated procedures
 - Monitor telemetry
 - Review logged information
- Ruby is used to create and customize applications and procedures.
- Cross platform: Windows, Linux, Mac OSX.
- Used by NASA, Lockheed Martin, Ball, & many others.

COSMOS Block Diagram

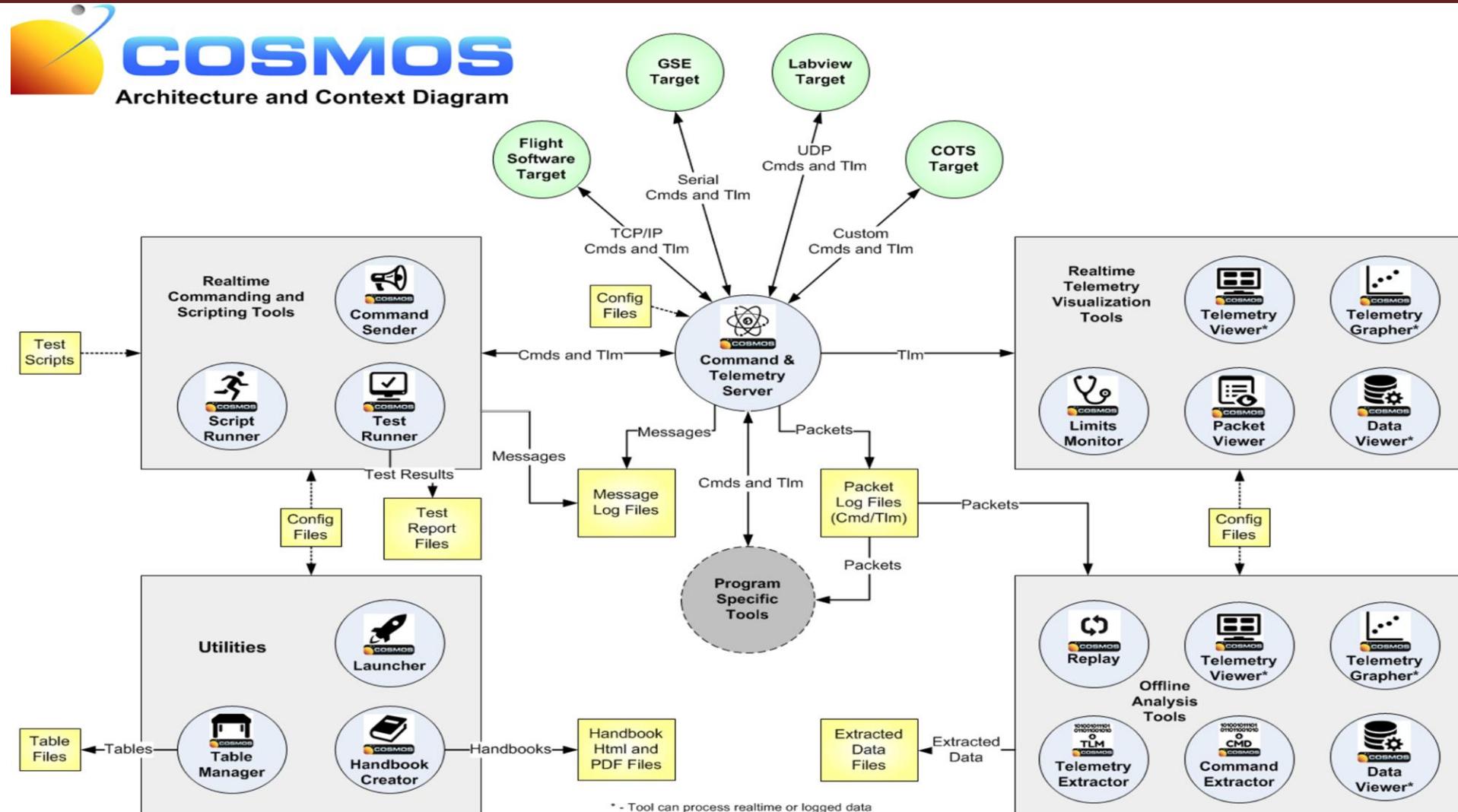


Image Ref: <https://github.com/BallAerospace/COSMOS>

COSMOS Basic Tools



The screenshot displays three windows of the COSMOS Basic Tools:

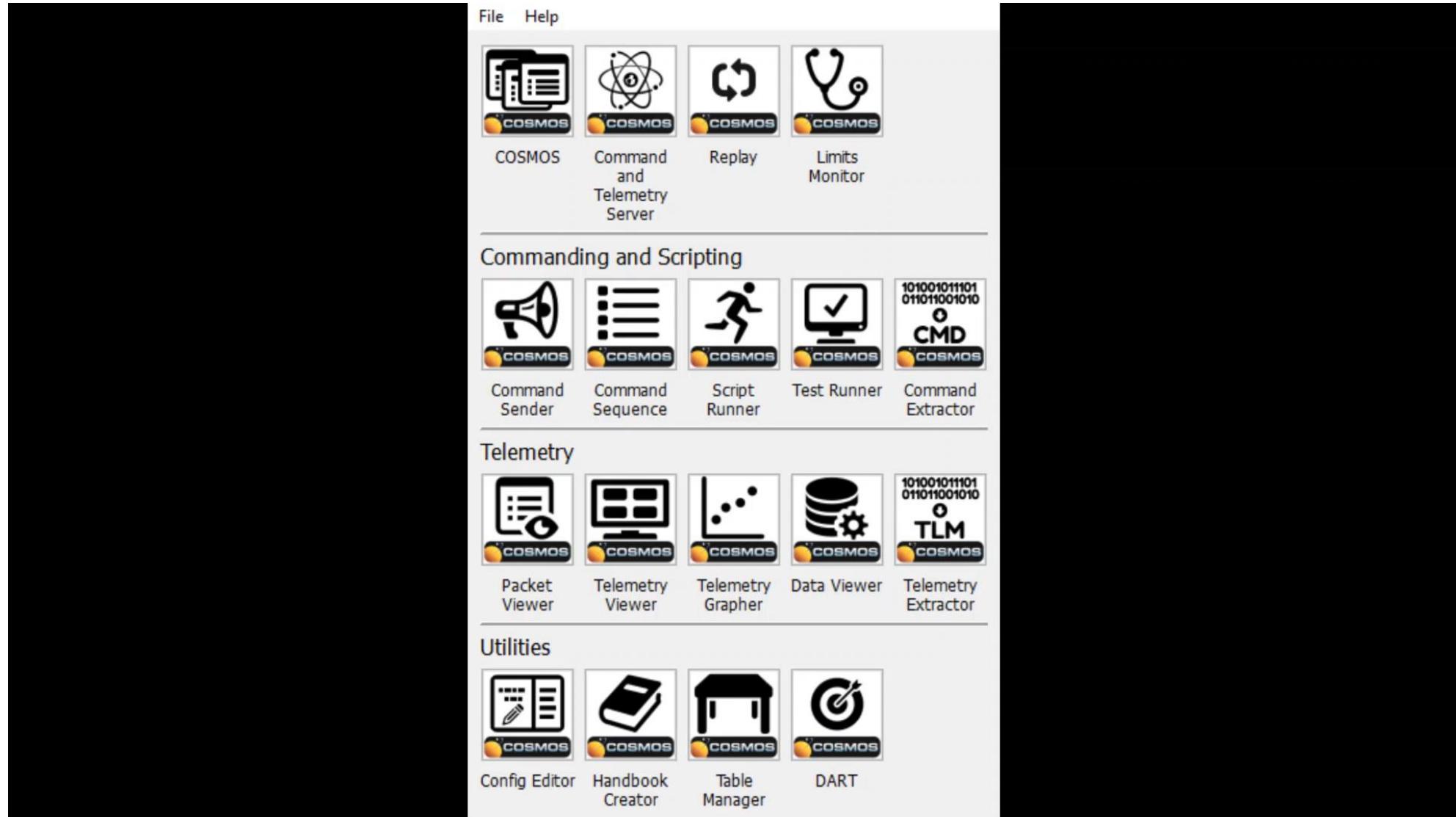
- Packet Viewer : Formatted Telemetry with Units**: Shows a table of telemetry data for "VCC-CERES" target, "SCIENCE" packet. The table includes items like BATT_TLM_VBAT, BATT_TLM_IBAT, and various GPS and EPS parameters.
- Command Sender**: Shows a table of parameters for "VCC-CERES" target, command "UPDT_CTRL_MTRX". It includes fields for Name, Value or State, Units, and Description, such as TC_OPCODE and various GPS EXT parameters.
- COSMOS Command and Telemetry Server - VCC Mission v1.1**: Shows logging controls (Start/Stop Logging, Telemetry/Command Logging) and configuration for the VTGS interface, including Cmd and Tim Logging settings and file sizes.

Packet Viewer

Command
Sender

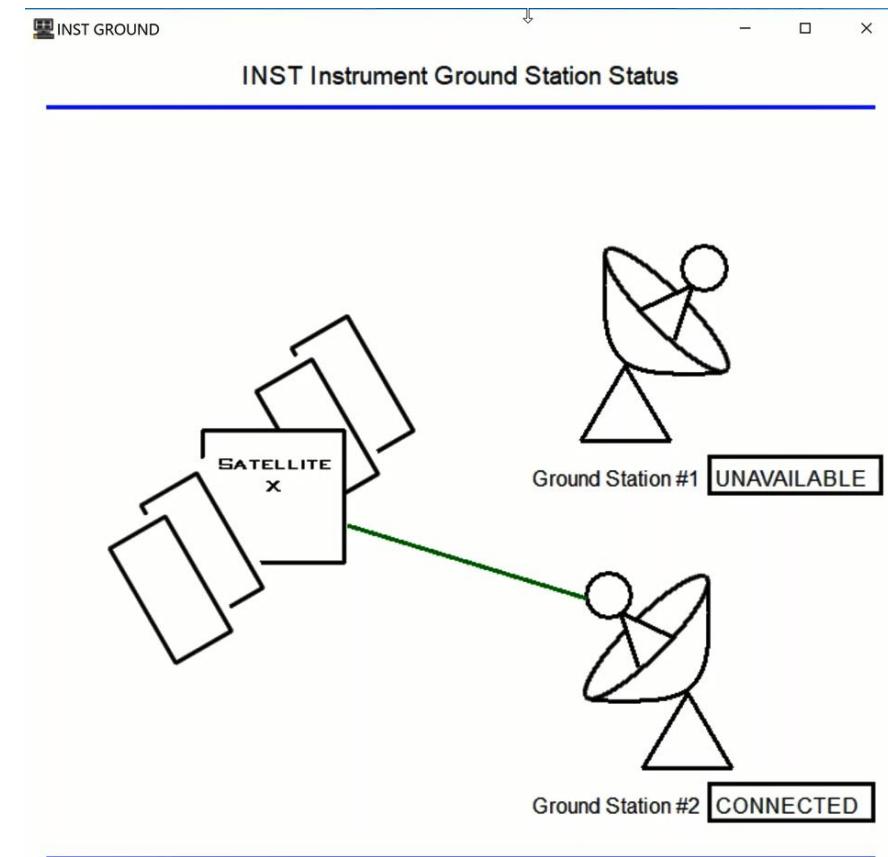
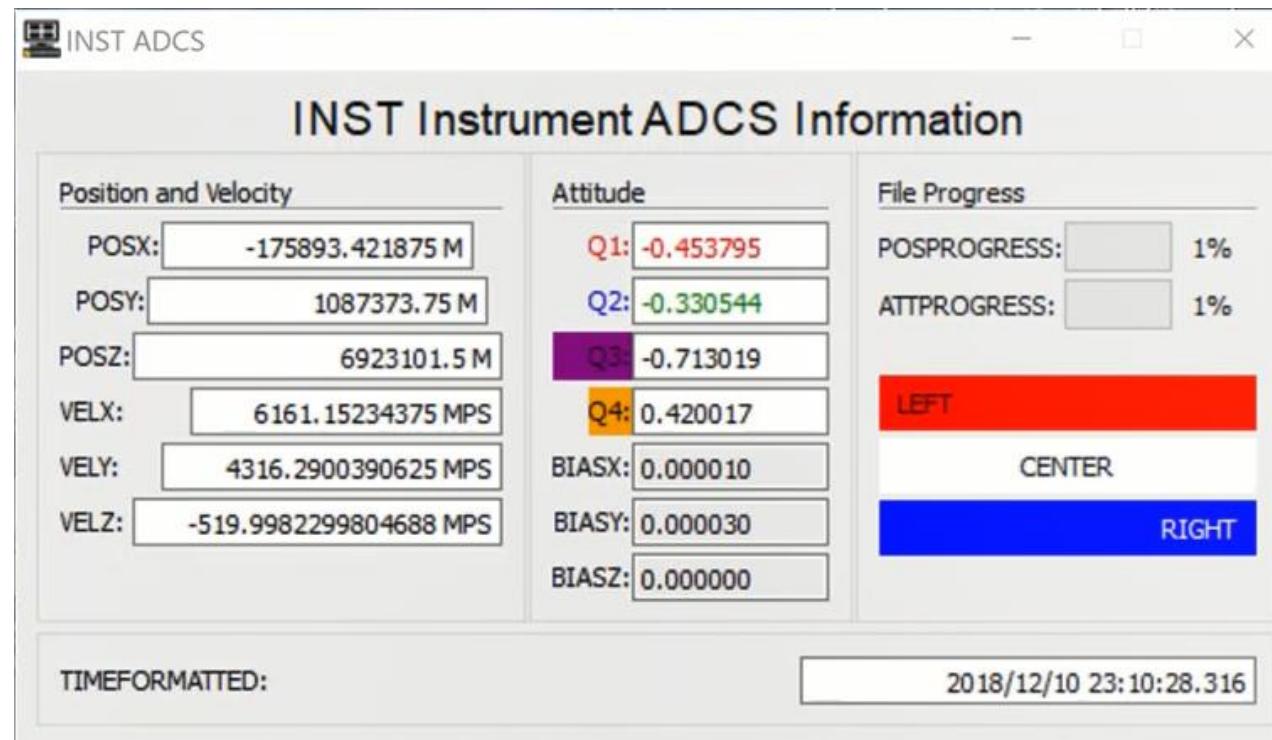
Command &
Telemetry Server

Demonstration Video



COSMOS: Future Work

- Telemetry Screens
- Autonomous Operation through Command Sequences



Images from Ball Aerospace COSMOS Demo.



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A photograph of a satellite in space, showing its solar panels and body against the backdrop of Earth's horizon and a colorful sunset/sunrise.

VT Ground Station Commercial S-Band Addition

Zach Leffke

Research Faculty



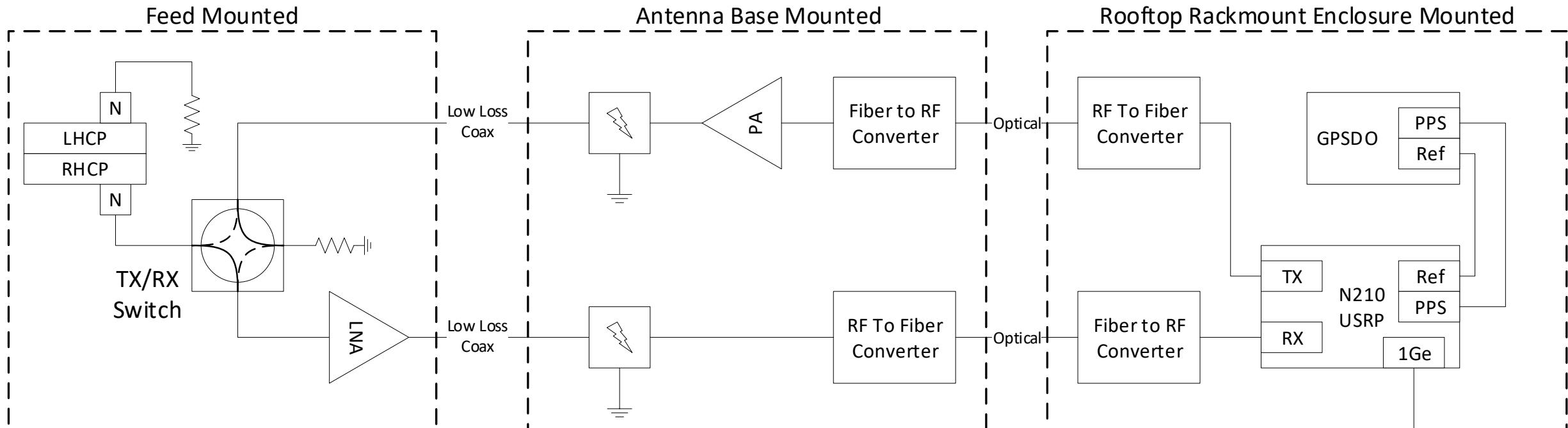
MISSION OPS

Key Features

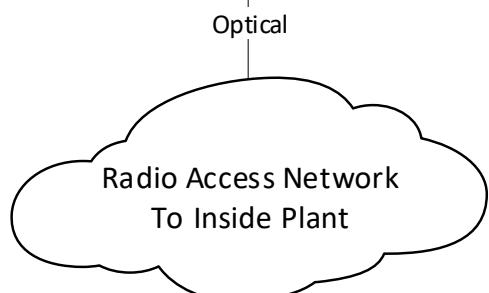
- 2.4m Parabolic Antenna (prime focus dish)
- Mounted on high end precision tracking pedestal
- Stepped Septum Feed (RHCP/LHCP)
- S-Band Frequency Allocations
 - Compatible with commercial/federal licensing
- Roof mounted on secure facility (no unrestricted physical access)
- Secure access operations center
- Software Radio based signal processing (GNU Radio)
- GPS Disciplined Oscillator for timing and accurate frequency reference
- Custom, antenna mounted, RF Front End
- Excellent lightning protection network
- Customer data access through secure VPN connection (real time and historical)
- Estimate installation spring/summer 2019, operational fall semester 2019.



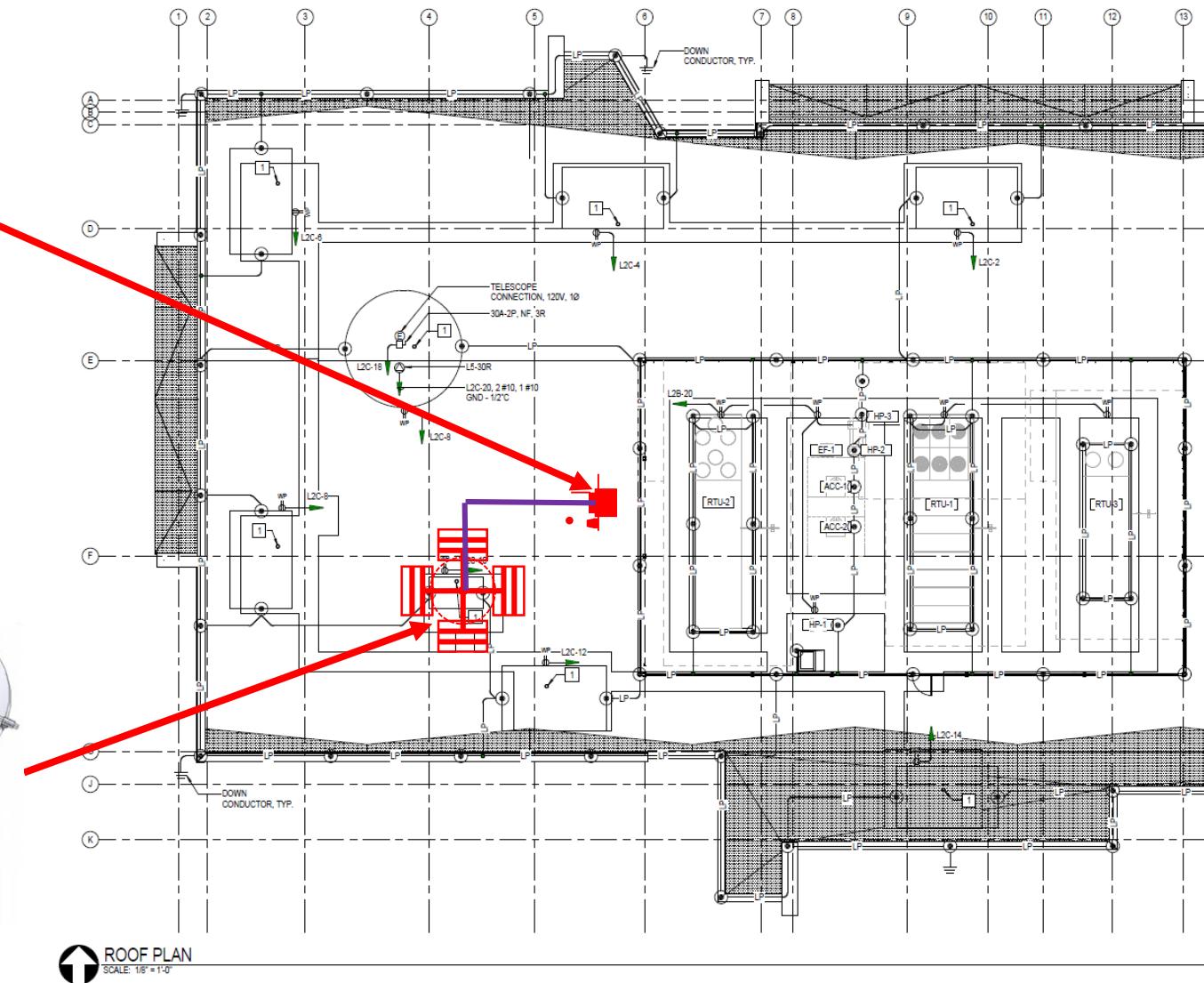
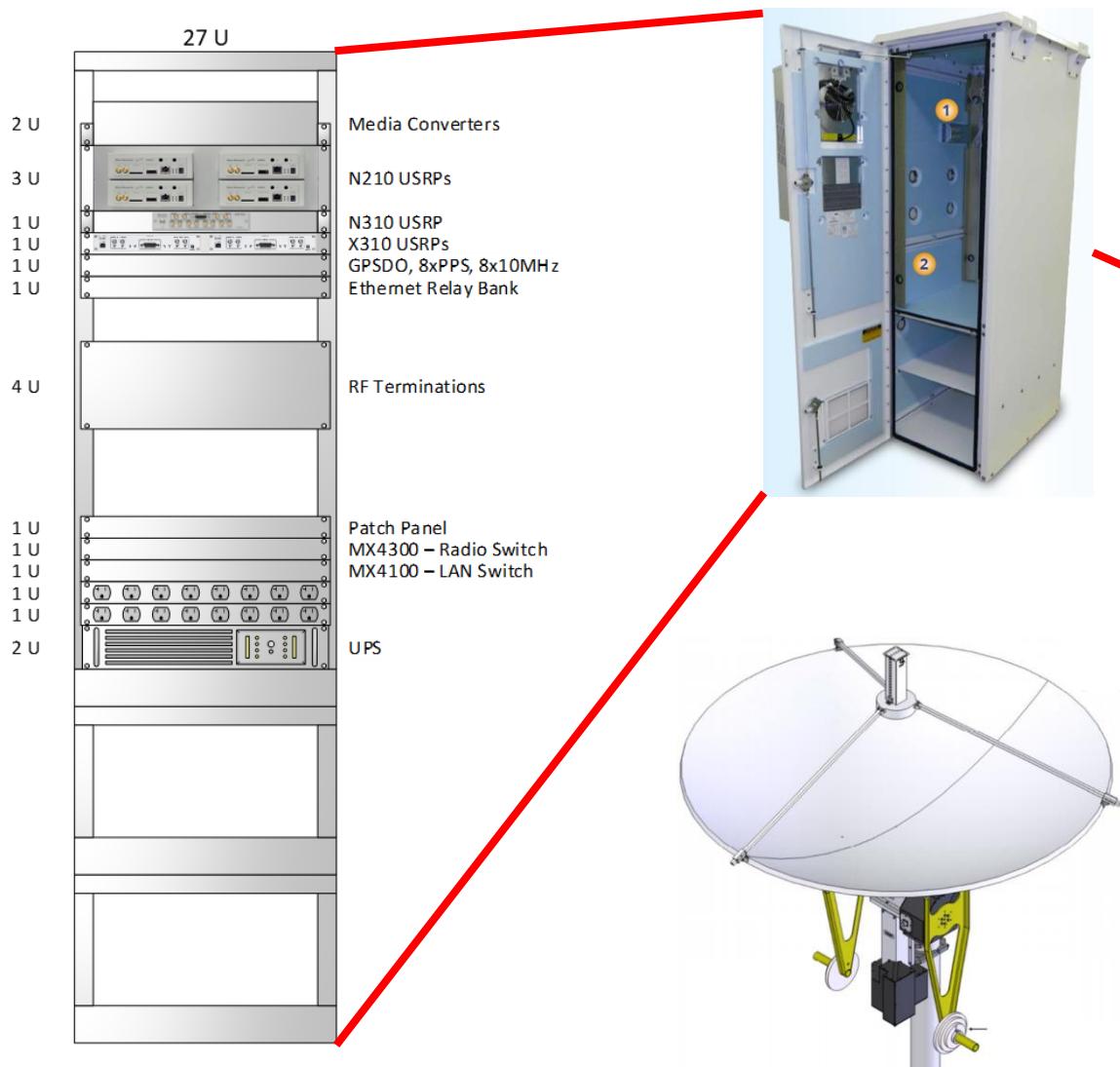
RF Block Diagram & Simplified Characteristics



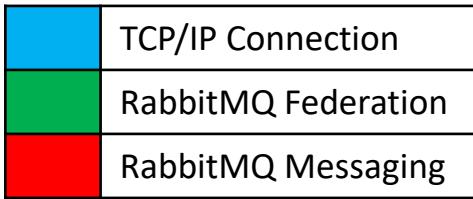
Transmit		Receive	
Frequency [MHz]:	2025-2110	Frequency [MHz]:	2200-2290
TX Power [W]:	60	System Noise Figure [dB]:	~1.0
Gain [dB]:	~33	Gain [dB]:	~33
		G_T [dB/K]:	~11.0



S-Band Ground Station Rooftop Layout

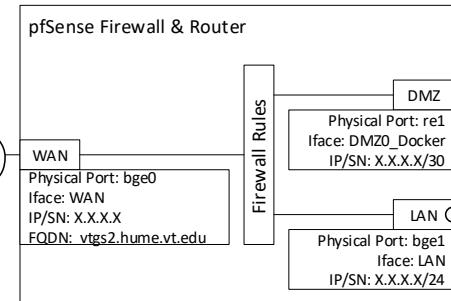


Customer Data Access

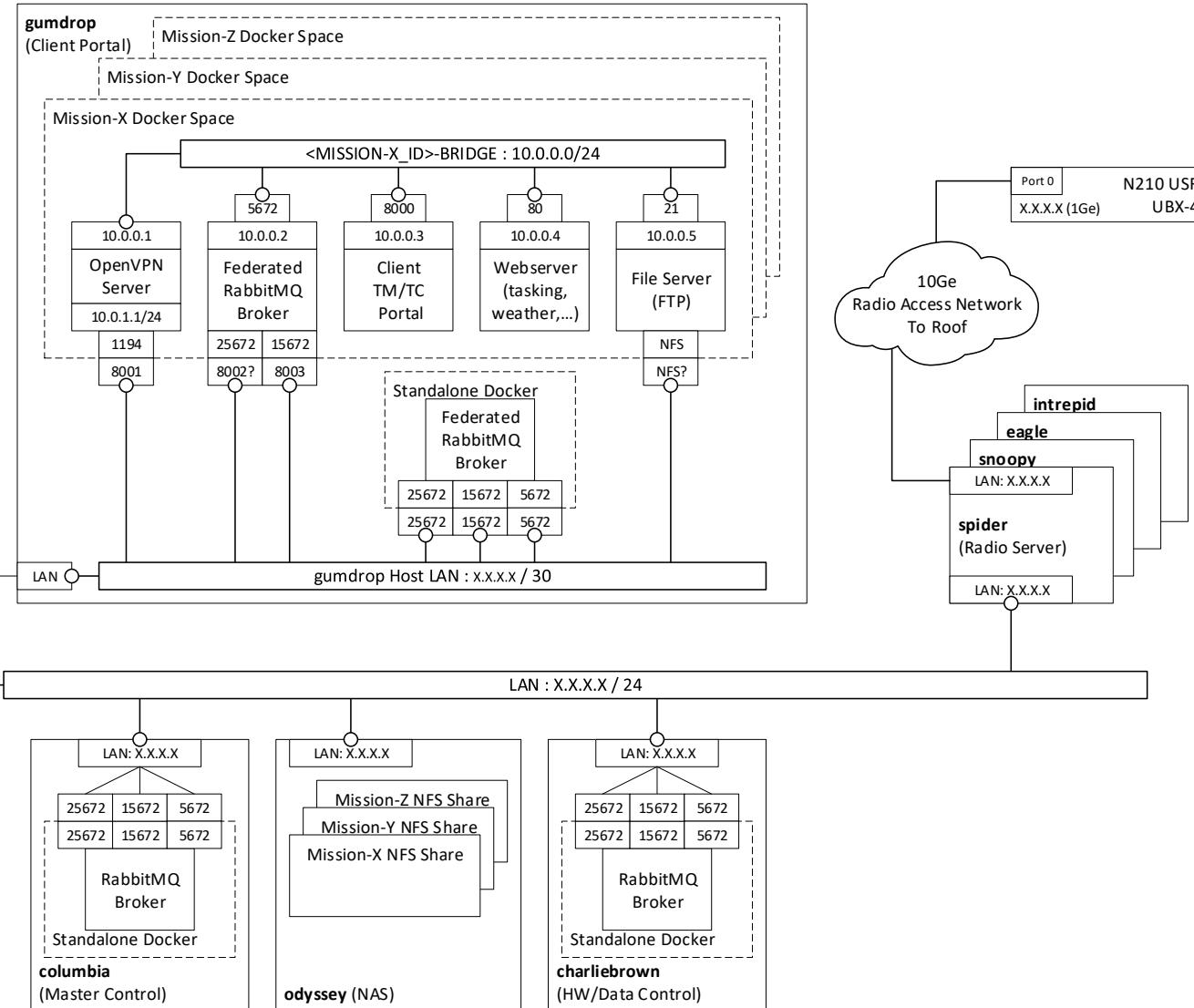


Customer Site

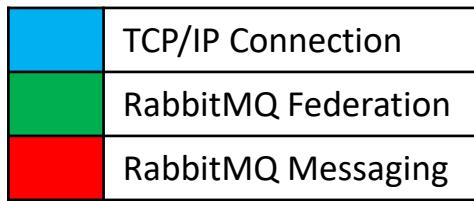
INTERNET



Client configs:
 Server: vtgs2.hume.vt.edu
 Port: 8001
 Client IP: 10.0.1.2/24

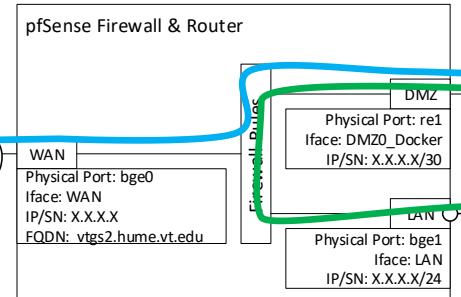


Customer Data Access – ex. Real Time Streaming



Customer Site
(i.e. AWS)

INTERNET

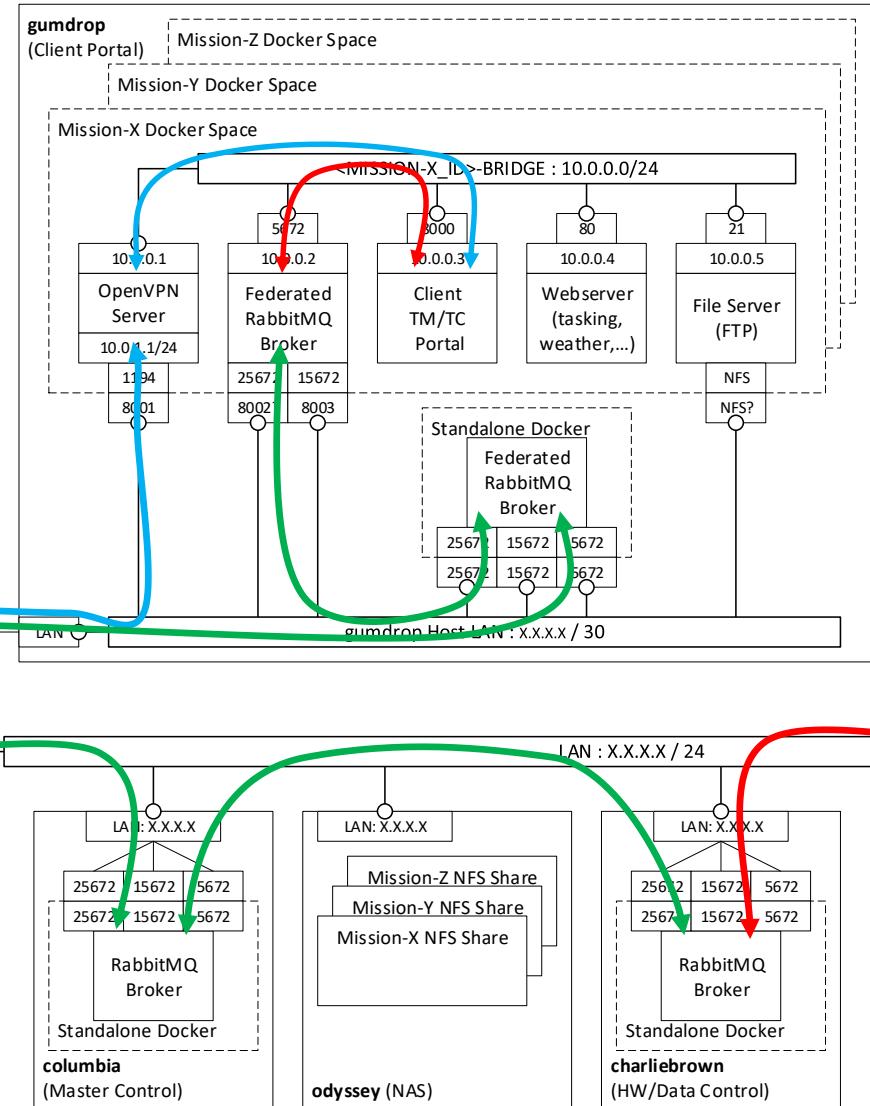


Client configs:

Server: vtgs2.hume.vt.edu

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Client IP: 10.0.1.2/24



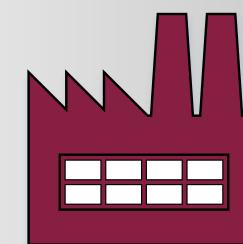


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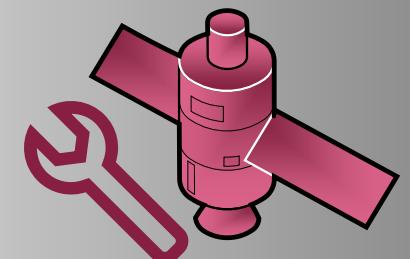


Laboratory Facilities

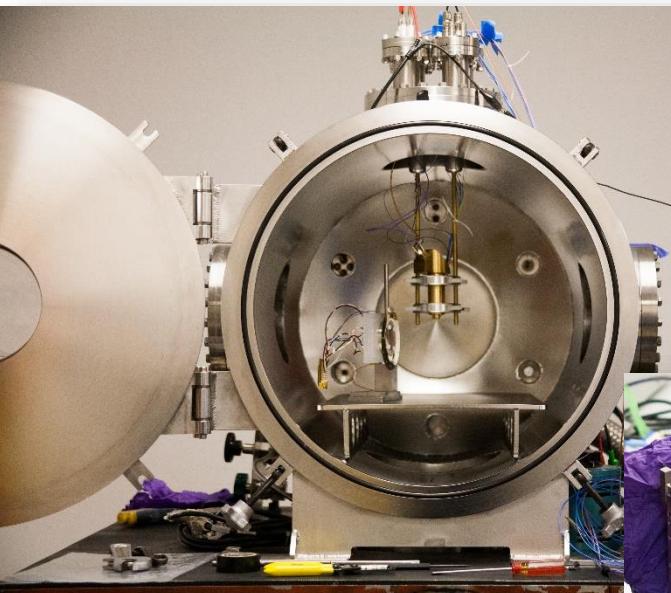
Stephen Noel
Research Faculty



PLANNING & FABRICATION INTEGRATION AND TESTING



Overview



- VT facilities used for buildup and verification testing of LAICE 6U CubeSat payload
- VSGC VCC satellite constellation program (1U)
- Procedures based on NASA standards
- Pick-and-place & solder re-flow oven for PCB assembly
- Contamination control
 - 4 laminar flow benches
 - Class 10,000 capable clean room
- ESD mitigation
 - Anti-static mats, ground-straps, ESD lotion, and ground-strap testers
 - ESD-safe tools
- 5 vacuum chambers of various sizes
- Small machine shop for prototyping
- CubeSat-compatible air bearing platforms
- Hot-filament ion source



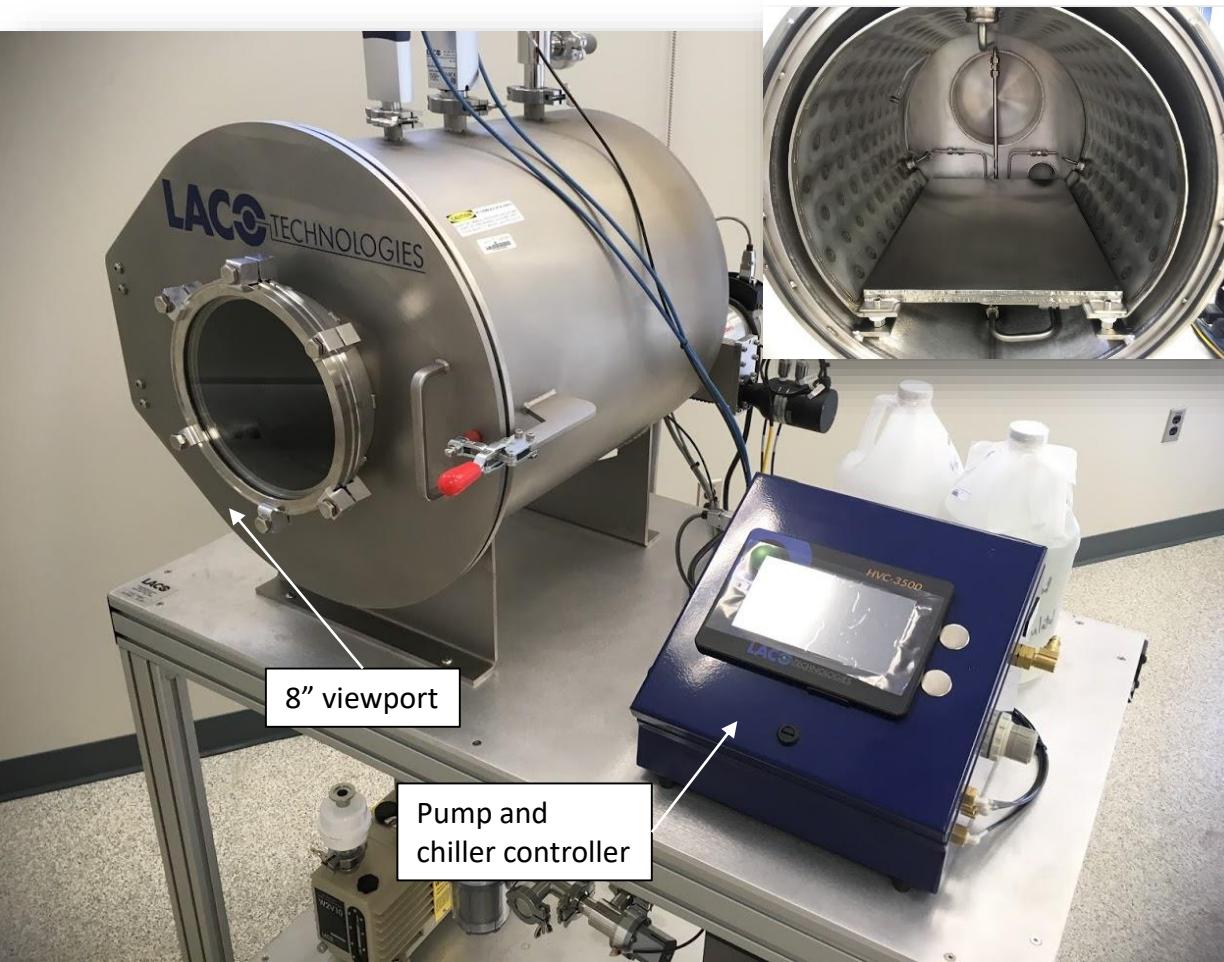
- **Specs:**

- Capable of ISO 7 (Class 10,000) classification

- **Status:**

- **Upgraded September 2018**
 - New ESD smocks, dirt mats, and control procedure
- Currently configured for flight board assembly (pick and place)
- Can be re-configured for more bench space
- Assembly of LAICE CubeSat payload performed here
- VCC USIP 1U CubeSat assembly performed here

Interior View



- **Specs:**

- Sized for 6U CubeSat form factor
- Minimum pressure: $< 5 \times 10^{-7}$ Torr
- **-45 to 200°C**
- Digital controller for valves and chiller operation; programmable recipes
- Fluorocarbon-based chiller fluid pumped through platen and shroud for thermal control
- Built in 2017

Shaker Table (Potential Future Asset)



- **Specs:**

- 5000 lbf-in Sine and Random
- 95g sine peak, 50g random acceleration
- 78.7 in/sec max velocity
- Usable frequency range up to 3000 Hz

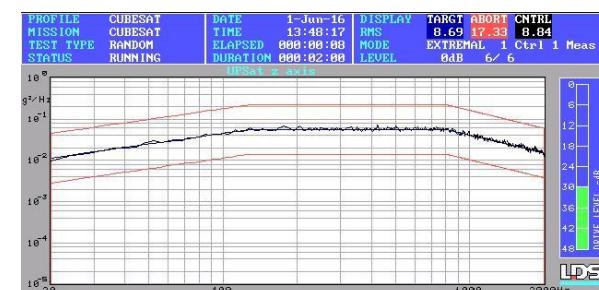
- Capable of current NASA workmanship, acceptance, and qualification levels

- **Requires:**

- **Control system design**
- **Hearing PPE**
- **GUI development**
- **Power and compressed air hookups**



LDS V850 Shaker

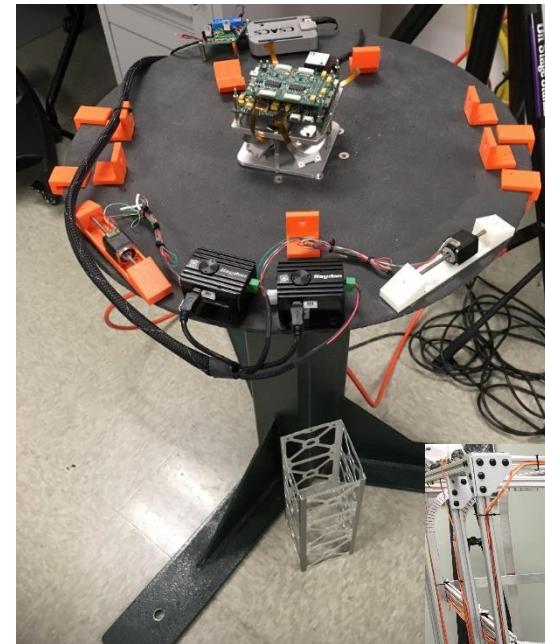


LDS SPA-K Amplifier

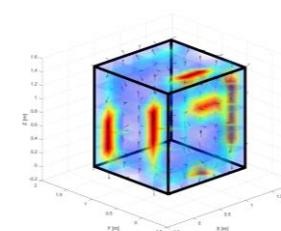
CubeSat Testbed – Simulations Lab



- CubeSat air bearing
 - Sized for up to 6U CubeSat mounting
 - $\pm 15^\circ$ tilt angular flexibility
 - Auto balancing (coming soon)
 - Maximum mass 136 kg
 - VectorNav VN-100 IMU
 - Carbon fiber mounting plate
- Helmholtz cage
 - 1.5m x 1.5m x 1.5m
 - Automated calibration routine in development
 - Integrated GUI with STK for hardware-in-the-loop orbit simulation
 - At least ± 2 Gauss (200 μ T) in all three axes
 - Verifying uniformity and performing upgrades Spring 2019



CubeSat Attitude
Control Simulator
(CSACS)



VT Helmholtz Cage

- Spring 2019
 - Configure air bearing for 1U and 3U form factors
 - CSACS procedures
 - Install shake table
- 2019 and beyond...
 - Goals:
 - Space@VT fully functional end-to-end CubeSat assembly and testing facility
 - Fee-for-service opportunities
 - Leverage laboratory and experience in upcoming CubeSat proposals

Retain more aspects of satellite design, assembly, testing, and operations at Virginia Tech!



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Future Work

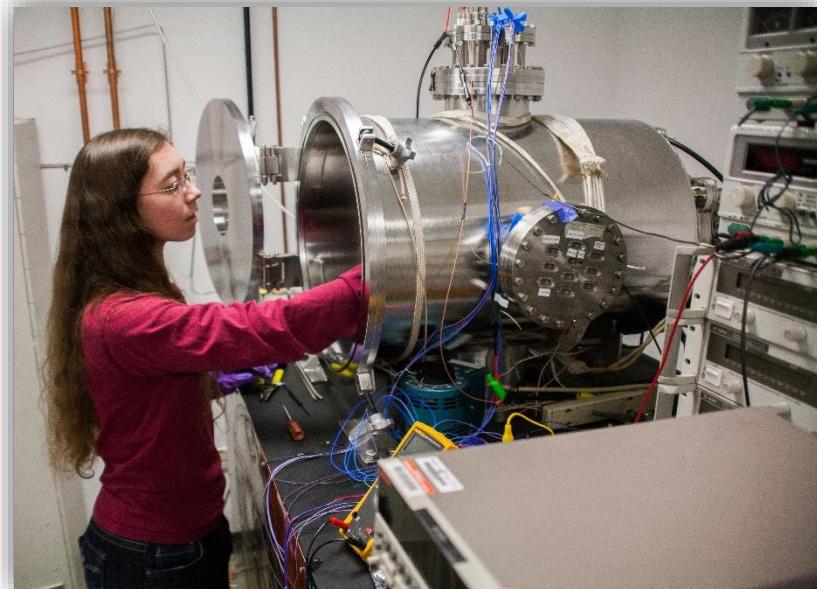
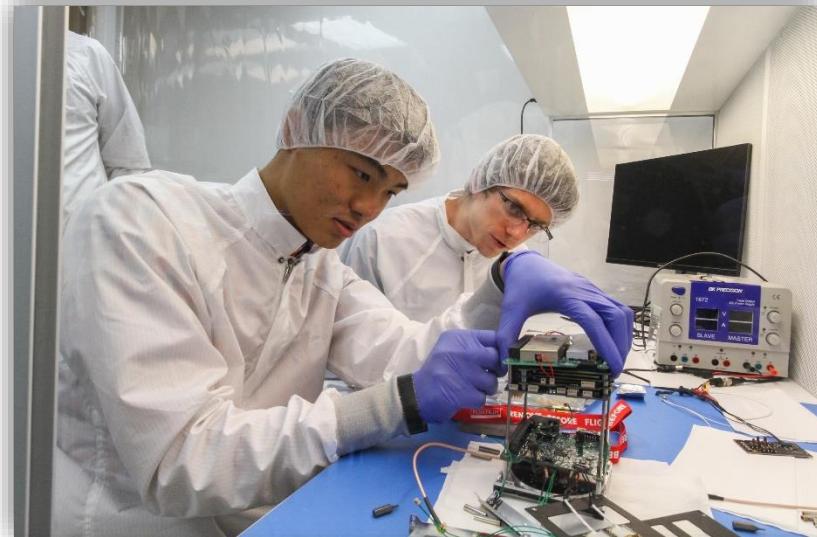
Stephen Noel

- Most of the resources are not fully operational yet
 - Requires additional people time and continual financial investment
- If we want to someday take on a full CubeSat mission (payload, bus, and ground elements) we need to invest in this kind of infrastructure **before the mission gets awarded**
- None of this would be possible without student effort (funded and unfunded)
 - Need a trained and highly motivated student workforce
 - Crucial to planning for future success in CubeSat missions
 - Don't throw the students into a satellite hardware mission without any background and faculty oversight

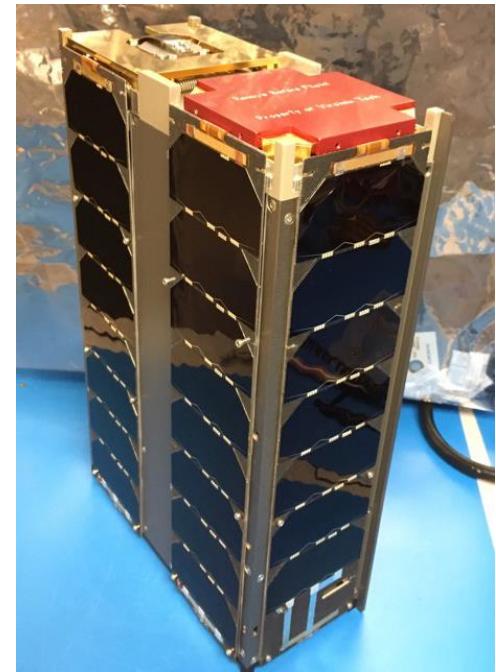
Persistent investment and effort needed from students and faculty to build this infrastructure

Educational Skills

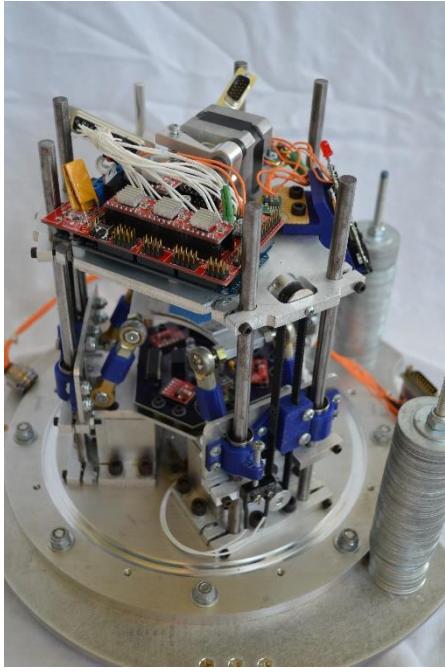
- Soldering for survivability – NASA standards
 - Hand-soldering best practices
 - Solder joint inspection and cleaning
 - Pick and place and solder reflow oven training
- Electronics prototyping and debugging
 - Coding on Raspberry Pi's, Arduino, etc.
 - FPGAs and microcontrollers
 - Schematic design, layout best practices, fabrication and assembly
 - Harness design, fabrication and documentation
- General lab test equipment training
 - Power supplies, oscilloscopes, multi-meters, current sensors
- Vacuum chamber best practices
- Clean room training
 - Flight component handling and cleaning
- Staking, potting, and conformal coating procedures and best practices
- ESD control
- Machine shop training
 - Drill press, CNC, drop saw



Projects



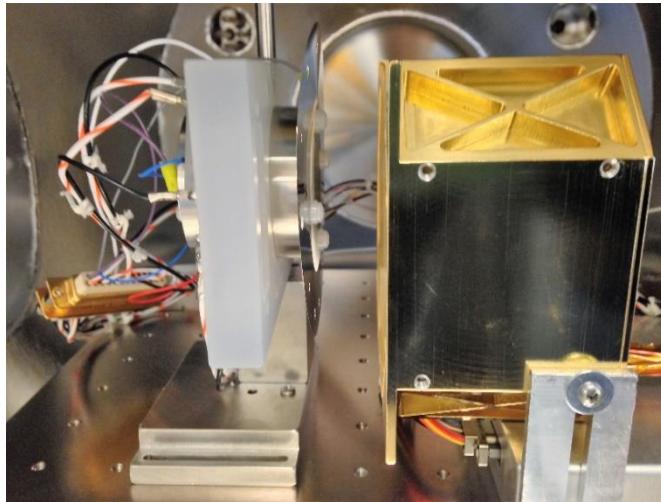
LAICE 6U CubeSat



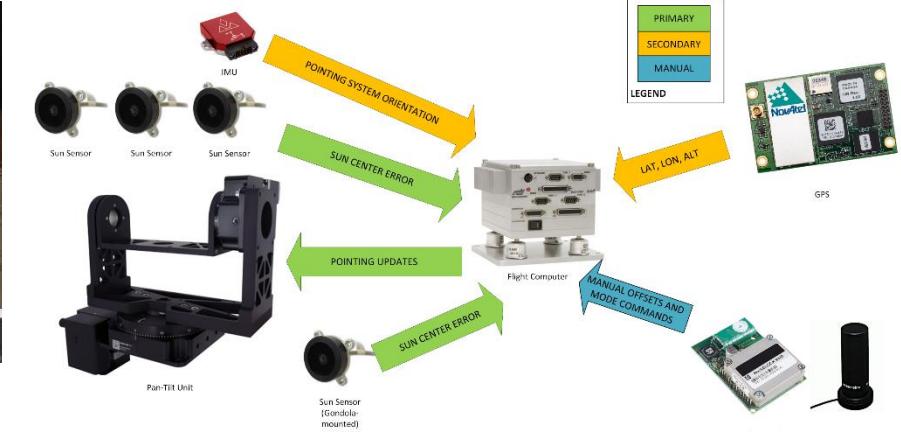
RockSat-X sounding rocket payload



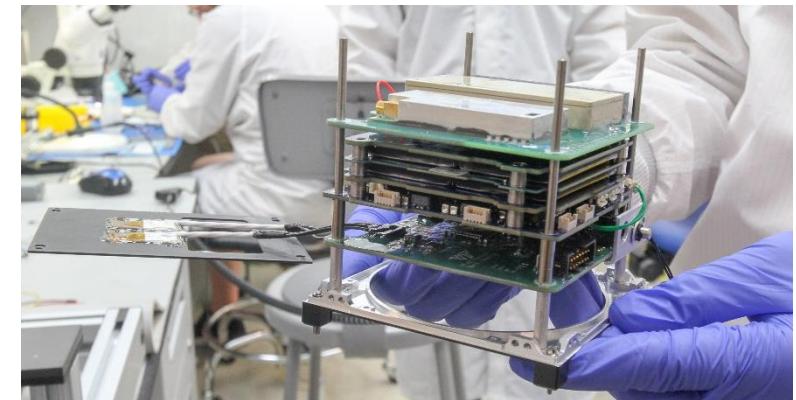
GLO instrument pointing platform for high altitude balloons



GRIDS Instrument validation with hot filament ion source



Payload design / systems engineering



VCC CubeSat assembly

Future Work for VT Spaceflight Programs



- Flat-sat implementation of SharkSat/HokieBus
 - NASA core flight system (embedded processors)
 - Simulated channel with SDRs
 - COSMOS for ground station simulation
 - ADCS
 - Telemetry sensors
 - Smallsat power systems
- Facilities
 - Expand lab capabilities for development and testing
 - Expand VTGS capabilities
- Secure containers for resilient Smallsat subsystems
- Autonomous optimization for robust Smallsat tasking
- Distributed and heterogeneous network communications
 - Cross-links
 - Mesh networks



COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING
KEVIN T. CROFTON DEPARTMENT OF
AEROSPACE AND OCEAN ENGINEERING
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Thank you for your support!

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Space @ Virginia Tech

Center for Space Science and Engineering Research

Relevant Links and Publications



- **Links:**

- [VTGS GitHub](#)
- [Space@VT Lab GitHub Organization](#)
- [Space@VT Documentation Cloud](#) (access by request only)

- **Publications:**

- [VTGS Overview \(IEEE Aerospace\)](#)
- [“Implementation of an actor framework for a ground station” \(IEEE Aerospace\)](#)