

PERSONAL AND CONTACT INFO

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

Dust-reddened quasars; quasar feedback; quasar host galaxy feeding; circumgalactic medium; UV, optical and near IR imaging spectroscopy

TEACHING INTERESTS

Undergraduate physics and astronomy; high school outreach; inclusive teaching; education technology

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS AND EDUCATION

University of California, Riverside, Winter 2023–present

- Assistant Project Scientist; Lecturer

University of California Riverside, Extension, Summer 2025–present

- Instructor

University of California, Riverside, Fall 2018–Winter 2023

- Postdoctoral Scholar, supervised by Fred Hamann

University of California, Santa Cruz, Winter 2018–Summer 2018

- Interim Postdoctoral Scholar, supervised by Piero Madau and Alexie Leauthaud

University of California, Santa Cruz, Fall 2012–Fall 2017

- Ph.D. in Astronomy 2017, advised by J. Xavier Prochaska
- M.S. 2015

The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Fall 2008–Spring 2012

- B.S. Physics, with honors
- Exchange programs with University of California, Santa Barbara, and Berkeley

GRANTS, HONORS AND AWARDS

- Hubble Space Telescope Cycle-29, title: Probing Feeding and Feedback in the Circumgalactic Medium of Quasars via Direct Detection of Inflows, ID: 16622, \$178,202, Space Telescope Science Institute, 2021
- Funds for Astronomical Meetings: Outreach to Underrepresented Scientists (FAMOUS) travel grant, American Astronomical Society, 2020
- Hubble Space Telescope Cycle-25, title: Observing AGN Feedback Down-the-Barrel Using Associated Absorbers at $z \lesssim 1.5$, ID: 15034, \$132,631, Space Telescope Science Institute, 2017
- Graduate Student Association Travel Grant, UC Santa Cruz, 2017
- Next Generation Telescope Science Institute (NEXSI) Fellowship, UC Santa Cruz, 2012
- Regents' Fellowship, UC Santa Cruz, 2012
- Student speech representative at scholarship presentation ceremony, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2012
- Nine scholarships totaling the full tuition for academic excellence and international exchanges, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2008–2012

- Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship, California Institute of Technology, 2011

TELESCOPE PROPOSALS

- Co-Investigator of A Deep Survey for Redder/Fainter Extremely Red Quasars, awarded 4 nights at Keck Observatory Keck I/LRIS
- Co-Investigator of Extreme Quasar Feedback at the Peak of the Galaxy Formation Epoch, awarded 7 nights at Keck Observatory Keck I/OSIRIS
- Co-Investigator of Mapping the Extended Infall/Outflow Gas Around Extremely Red Quasars, awarded 3.5 nights at Keck Observatory Keck II/KCWI
- Co-Investigator of Nature of Mid-infrared Flares in Nearby Galaxies: Tidal Disruption Events or Turn-on AGN?, awarded 4 nights at Lick Observatory Shane/Kast
- Principal Investigator of A Potentially Transformative Approach to Cluster Cosmology, awarded 22 nights at Lick Observatory Shane/Kast
- Co-Investigator of Resolving the Small-scale Structure of the Circumgalactic Medium, awarded 9 nights at Keck Observatory Keck I/LRIS
- Principal Investigator of Late-time Optical Spectral Signatures of Tidal Disruption Candidates, awarded 22 nights at Lick Observatory Shane/Kast
- Co-Investigator of To Explore Emission Lines on Large Spatial Scales of Red Galaxies Hosting Intermediate-mass Black Holes, awarded 6 nights at Lick Observatory Shane/Kast
- Co-Investigator of The HI Gas of 2175 Å Absorbers, awarded 20 nights at Lick Observatory Shane/Kast
- Co-Investigator of Circumgalactic Medium Studies at $z \sim 2$ with Close Quasar Pairs, awarded 4 nights at Keck Observatory Keck II/ESI

OBSERVING AND/OR DATA REDUCTION EXPERIENCES

- Keck Observatory Keck I/LRIS; Keck I/MOSFIRE; Keck I/OSIRIS; Keck II/ESI, Keck II/KCWI
- Very Large Telescope UT2/XSHOOTER
- Large Binocular Telescope Observatory/LUCI
- Palomar Observatory 200-inch Hale/Cosmic Web Imager
- Lick Observatory Shane Kast; ShaneAO/ShARCS

TECHNICAL WORKING KNOWLEDGE

- Languages: IDL, Python, Mathematica, C, Fortran, SQL, English, Chinese
- Software: SExtractor, DS9, IRAF, PyeIt, linetools, speedb, SVN, Git, Vim, Jupyter Notebook, LaTeX

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

- Member of the Physics Organization for Women and the Under-represented, UC Riverside, 2018–present
- Member of Thirty Meter Telescope International Science Development Team, 2018–present
- Time allocation committee for Hubble Space Telescope; review panelist for USA National Science Foundation Astronomy and Astrophysics Grants and CAREER, 2017–present
- Referee for The Astrophysical Journal and Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society, 2015–present
- Member of the UC Riverside team of the American Physical Society’s Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity Alliance, 2020–2022
- Judge for Chambliss Astronomy Achievement Student Awards of the American Astronomical Society, 2018–2021

- Co-organizer of department colloquia and prospective student visits, UC Santa Cruz, 2017, 2015
- Supervisory council member and vice-president of Society of Physics Students of United College, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2009–2011

TEACHING, MENTORING AND OUTREACH

- Lecturer for PHYS 2B and PHYS 2C: General Physics, UC Riverside, 2023–present
- Instructor for PHYS XR 50: Introduction to Applied Data Science, UC Riverside Extension, 2025–present
- Planetarium talk on quasars at Orange Coast College, 2025
- Co-mentor for Jarred Gillette’s doctoral thesis, UC Riverside, 2018–2023
- Mentor for Greg Sallaberry’s undergraduate senior thesis under the STEM Diversity Program Lamat, UC Santa Cruz, 2017–2019
- Mentor for the Science Internship Program for high school students (leading to the Siemens Competition in Math Science & Technology and the American Astronomical Society general meeting), UC Santa Cruz, 2017, 2016
- Teaching Assistant for the California State Summer School for Mathematics and Science (COSMOS; led high school students on pre-scripted projects), 2017, 2016
- Teaching Assistant for PHYS 9B: Introduction to Research in Physics and Astrophysics (cooperative research and homework labs targeting underrepresented minorities); ASTR 2: Overview of the Universe; ASTR 6: The Space-Age Solar System; ASTR 1: Introduction to the Cosmos, UC Santa Cruz, 2012–2017
- On-call for Ask-An-Astronomer (answered questions from general public), UC Santa Cruz, 2014–2016
- Private tutor for low-income high school students in English and Mathematics, 2003–2008

RESEARCH EXPERIENCES OUTSIDE OF ASTRONOMY

- Climate change sensitivity evaluation from spaceborne instrument measurements, with Y. L. Yung, at Caltech
- Determining cloud base and thickness from spaceborne imaging and lidar profiling, with Y. L. Yung and Dong L. Wu, at Caltech/NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory
- Study on the occurrence of high winds and gusts during Northeast monsoon in Hong Kong, at Hong Kong Observatory
- Mechanical vibration of thin plates (senior thesis), with Kenneth Young, at The Chinese University of Hong Kong

SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES

- Invited talk at Galaxies Journal Club, Space Telescope Science Institute, 2025
- Invited talk at S. Borthakur’s circumgalactic medium group meeting, Arizona State University, 2022
- Invited contribution at Fundamentals of Gaseous Halos Program, Kavli Institute for Theoretical Physics, 2021
- Invited contribution at Santa Cruz Galaxy Workshop, UC Santa Cruz, 2017
- Invited contribution at Inter[Stellar and Galactic] Medium Program of Studies Winter Writing Workshop, UC Santa Cruz, 2016
- Invited astronomy talk at Yuk L. Yung’s atmospheric science group meeting, Caltech, 2014
- Invited contribution at Intergalactic Matters, Max Planck Institute for Astronomy, 2014
- 47 other contributed presentations at research institutions and conferences in USA, international, and remote locations

(* = mentee)

- Chen, C., He, Z., Yi, W., Ji, T., **Lau, M. W.**, & Ma, B., 2025, Tracking Outflow Using Line-Locking (TOLL). II. Large Line-locking Web Identified in Quasar J151352+085555, *The Astrophysical Journal*, Volume 980, Issue 1, pp. 28
- **Lau, M. W.**, Perrotta, S., Hamann, F., *Gillette, J., Rupke, D. S. N., Vayner, A., Zakamska, N. L., & Wylezalek, D., 2024, [OIII] λ 5007 emissions in extremely red quasars (ERQs) are compact, *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society*, Volume 532, Issue 2, pp. 2044
- *Gillette, J., Hamann, F., **Lau, M. W.**, & Perrotta, S., 2024, Accurate Systemic Redshifts and Outflow Speeds for Extremely Red Quasars (ERQs), *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society*, Volume 527, Issue 1, pp. 950
- *Gillette, J., **Lau, M. W.**, Hamann, F., Perrotta, S., Rupke, D. S. N., Wylezalek, D., Zakamska, N. L., & Vayner, A., 2023, Compact and Quiescent Circumgalactic Medium and Ly α Halos around Extremely Red Quasars, *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society*, Volume 526, Issue 2, pp. 2578
- **Lau, M. W.**, Prochaska, J. X., & Hennawi, J. F., 2023, Quasars Probing Quasars. IX. (QPQ9), VizieR On-line Data Catalog: J/ApJ/857/126. Originally published in *The Astrophysical Journal*, 857, 126 (2018).
- **Lau, M. W.**, Hamann, F., *Gillette, J., Perrotta, S., Rupke, D. S. N., Wylezalek, D., & Zakamska, N. L., 2022, Probing the Inner Circumgalactic Medium and Quasar Illumination around the Reddest ‘Extremely Red Quasar’, *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society*, Volume 515, Issue 2, pp. 1624
- Fu, H., Xue, R., Prochaska, J. X., Stockton, A., Ponnada, S., **Lau, M. W.**, Cooray, A., & Narayanan, D., 2021, A Long Stream of Metal-Poor Cool Gas Around A Massive Starburst Galaxy at $z=2.67$, *The Astrophysical Journal*, Volume 908, Issue 2, article id. 188
- Horne, K., De Rosa, G., Peterson, B. M., et al. including **Lau, M. W.**, 2021, Space Telescope and Optical Reverberation Mapping Project. IX. Velocity-Delay Maps for Broad Emission Lines in NGC 5548, *The Astrophysical Journal*, Volume 907, Issue 2, id. 76
- Kriss, G. A., De Rosa, G., Ely, J., et al. including **Lau, M. W.**, 2021, Space telescope RM project. VIII. NGC5548 HST sp., VizieR On-line Data Catalog: J/ApJ/881/153. Originally published in *The Astrophysical Journal*, 881, 153 (2019).
- Williams, P. R., Pancoast, A., Treu, T., et al. including **Lau, M. W.**, 2020, Space Telescope and Optical Reverberation Mapping Project. XII. Broad-Line Region Modeling of NGC 5548, *The Astrophysical Journal*, Volume 902, Issue 1, article id. 74
- Kriss, G. A., De Rosa, G., Ely, J., et al. including **Lau, M. W.**, 2019, Space Telescope and Optical Reverberation Mapping Project. VIII. Modeling the Ultraviolet Spectrum of the Seyfert 1 Galaxy NGC5548, *The Astrophysical Journal*, Volume 881, Issue 2, article id. 153
- Findlay, J. R., Prochaska, J. X., Hennawi, J. F., Fumagalli, M., Myers, A. D., Bartle, S., Chehade, B., DiPompeo, M. A., Shanks, T., **Lau, M. W.**, & Rubin, K. H. R., 2018, Quasars Probing Quasars. X. The Quasar Pair Spectral Database, *The Astrophysical Journal Supplement Series*, Volume 236, Issue 2, article id. 44
- **Lau, M. W.**, Prochaska, J. X., & Hennawi, J. F., 2018, Quasars Probing Quasars. IX. The Kinematics Of the Circumgalactic Medium Surrounding $z \sim 2$ Quasars, *The Astrophysical Journal*, Volume 857, Issue 2, article id. 126
- Boyajian, T., Alonso, R., Ammerman, A., et al. including **Lau, M. W.**, 2018, The First Post-Kepler Brightness Dips of KIC 8462852, *The Astrophysical Journal Letters*, Volume 853, Issue 1, article id. L8
- Bose, S., Dong, S., Pastorello, A., et al. including **Lau, M. W.**, 2018, Gaia17biu/SN 2017egm

in NGC 3191: The Closest Hydrogen-poor Superluminous Supernova to Date Is in a “Normal”, Massive, Metal-rich Spiral Galaxy, *The Astrophysical Journal*, Volume 853, Issue 1, article id. 57

- Prochaska, J. X., Tejos, N., Inburchett, **Lau, M. W.**, Jhennawi, & O’Meara, J., 2017, specdb/specdb: First Release, Zenodo, available at <https://zenodo.org/records/1069833>
- Pei, L., Fausnaugh, M. M., Barth, A. J., et al. including **Lau, M. W.**, 2017, Space telescope RM project. V. NGC5548 sp. monitoring, *VizieR On-line Data Catalog: J/ApJ/837/131*. Originally published in *The Astrophysical Journal*, 837, 131 (2017).
- Mathur, S., Gupta, A., Page, K., et al. including **Lau, M. W.**, 2017, Space Telescope and Optical Reverberation Mapping Project. VII. Understanding the UV Anomaly in NGC 5548 with X-Ray Spectroscopy, 2017, *The Astrophysical Journal*, Volume 846, Issue 1, article id. 55
- Prochaska, J. X., **Lau, M. W.**, & Hennawi, J. F., 2017, Circumgalactic medium surrounding $z \sim 2$ quasars, *VizieR On-line Data Catalog: J/ApJ/796/140*. Originally published in *The Astrophysical Journal*, 796, 140 (2014).
- Pei, L., Fausnaugh, M. M., Barth, A. J., et al. including **Lau, M. W.**, 2017, Space Telescope and Optical Reverberation Mapping Project. V. Optical Spectroscopic campaign and Emission-line Analysis for NGC 5548, *The Astrophysical Journal*, Volume 837, Issue 2, article id. 131
- **Lau, M. W.**, Prochaska, J. X., & Hennawi, J. F., 2016, Quasars Probing Quasars. VIII. The Physical Properties of the Cool Circumgalactic Medium Surrounding $z \sim 2-3$ Massive Galaxies Hosting Quasars, *The Astrophysical Journal Supplement Series*, Volume 226, Issue 2, article id. 25
- Cai, Z., Fan, X., Peirani, S., Bian, F., Frye, B., McGreer, I., Prochaska, J. X., **Lau, M. W.**, Tejos, N., Ho, S., & Schneider, D. P., 2016, MAPPING the Most Massive Overdensities Through Hydrogen (MAMMOTH) I: Methodology, *The Astrophysical Journal*, Volume 833, Issue 2, article id. 135
- Rubin, K. H. R., Hennawi, J. F., Prochaska, J. X., Simcoe, R. A., Myers, A., & **Lau, M. W.**, 2015, Dissecting the Gaseous Halos of $z \sim 2$ Damped Ly α Systems with Close Quasar Pairs, *The Astrophysical Journal*, Volume 808, Issue 1, article id. 38
- Prochaska, J. X., **Lau, M. W.**, & Hennawi, J. F., 2014, Quasars Probing Quasars. VII. The Pinnacle of the Cool Circumgalactic medium Surrounds Massive $z \sim 2$ Galaxies, *The Astrophysical Journal*, Volume 796, Issue 2, article id. 140
- Prochaska, J. X., Hennawi, J. F., Lee, K.-G., Cantalupo, S., Bovy, J., Djorgovski, S. G., Ellison, S. L., **Lau, M. W.**, Martin, C. L., Myers, A., Rubin, K. H. R., & Simcoe, R. A., 2013, Quasars Probing Quasars. VI. Excess HI Absorption within One Proper Mpc of $z \sim 2$ Quasars, *The Astrophysical Journal*, Volume 776, Issue 2, article id. 136
- Jiang, Y., Aumann, H. H., **Lau, M. W.**, & Yung Y. L., 2011, Climate Change Sensitivity Evaluation from AIRS and IRIS measurements, *Proceedings of the SPIE*, Volume 8153, id. 81531Z

REFERENCES

- Fred Hamann, University of California, Riverside, fhamann@ucr.edu
- J. Xavier Prochaska, University of California, Santa Cruz, xavier@ucolick.org
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