

Term Project

OrbitSim

April 17, 2024

Paramvir Singh Lobana
Jian Jiao



Department of Mechanical, Industrial and Aerospace Engineering,
Concordia University
Montreal, QC, Canada

Contents

List of Figures	i
1 Introduction	1
2 Theories and Assumptions	2
2.1 Assumptions	2
2.1.1 Two Body Universe	2
2.1.2 2D Planar Assumption	2
2.1.3 System Reference	2
2.1.4 Instant delta V Application	2
2.2 Methods and Calculations	2
2.2.1 System kinematics	2
2.2.2 Satellite initialization	3
2.2.3 Hohmann Transfer	4
2.2.4 User Control Consideration	5
3 Design and Development	6
3.1 Identified Requirements	6
3.2 Numerical Implementation	6
3.2.1 Hohmann Transfer Implementation - Mode 1	9
3.2.2 User Controlled Burn - Mode 2	10
3.3 Graphical Implementation	11
4 Results	12
5 Discussion	14
5.1 Limitations	14
5.1.1 SFML Library Event Limitation	14
5.1.2 Frame Capture Performance	14
5.2 Error	14
5.2.1 Imperfect Initialization	14
5.2.2 Orbit accuracy close to the gravity source	15
5.2.3 Transfer ΔV error and correction	15
5.3 Lessons Learned	15
6 Conclusion	16
Appendices	17
A OrbitSim Source Code	17

List of Figures

1	Code snippet for the defined gravity source.	7
2	Code snippet for particle class.	8
3	Code snippet for first burn.	9
4	Code snippet for the second burn.	9
5	Code snippet for trim error correction.	10
6	Code snippet for user controlled burn.	10
7	Code snippet for normalizing current orbit into a circular orbit.	11
8	Graphical implementation for rendering the user interface elements	11
9	Graphical User Interface - Initial State.	12
10	OrbitSim showing different transfer phases.	13
11	Instructions as printed in the OrbitSim desktop application console window.	13

1 Introduction

Orbital mechanics is a branch of celestial mechanics that focuses on the motion of objects in space under the influence of gravitational forces. It's a fascinating field that explains how satellites, spacecraft, planets, moons, and other celestial bodies move and interact within their orbits.

The objective of this project is to program and simple self contained orbit simulation software for simulating the motion of satellites. The program is based on C++ language with SFML library to produce a user friendly interface.

The SFML (Simple and Fast Multimedia Library) is a cross-platform software development library designed to provide a simple interface for multimedia tasks such as graphics rendering, window management, audio playback, and user input handling. It's is widely used to create interactive applications. The library is open-source and easily accessible. For this reason it is used to construct the Graphics and improve the interactivity of the software.

The software enables user to manually control the orbit of the satellite by manually initiate prograde and retrograde burns or initiate Hohmann transfer between circular orbits. The software provide instant feedback on the radius and velocity of the satellite and it's orbit condition through the vis-viva equation.

This software is based on simple two body assumption and uses equations covered in the lectures; at the core, the software is an physics based real time simulation. The position of the velocity of the satellite is governed by kinematics and is calculated after each frame. This allows the trajectory of the satellite to be altered by user input instantaneously. However, this method also introduces errors during the calculation and will be discussed in detail in the error sections.

It is envisioned that this software can be used for teaching and live demonstration of simple orbital mechanics as it allows user to see the effect on orbit of their input. It is hoped this software can be a teaching tool for the future students of AERO 485.

2 Theories and Assumptions

2.1 Assumptions

To construct the simulation environment, certain assumptions are made to simplify the governing equations and reduce the complexity of the program. the details of each are discussed below.

2.1.1 Two Body Universe

The gravitational force interaction between the gravity source and the satellite is the only driving force experienced by the satellite. When simulating multiple satellites at one given occasion, the gravitational interaction between the satellite body is ignored.

2.1.2 2D Planar Assumption

The system is programmed in the 2D frame to reduce the computation power required of the program.

2.1.3 System Reference

A fixed absolute reference system is placed on the gravity source; the gravity source is assumed to be always stationary; thus, the Coriolis effect due to the motion of the gravity source is ignored.

2.1.4 Instant delta V Application

In the simulation, the application of delta V for orbit transfer is applied to the satellite instantly. Although this is not feasible for real life rocket systems to perform such an operation, it provides the best adherence to the Hohmann transfer assumption.

2.2 Methods and Calculations

This section covers the equations used to construct the governing equations used in the software.

2.2.1 System kinematics

The base function of the software is to simulate the motion of a satellite around a single gravity source in real time, the basic motion of the body is governed by newton's first law and gravitational law. As the simulation is conducted in 2D frame; only X and Y axis are established for computation. To compute the position and velocity of the satellite, a cartesian coordinate system is used to describe the position of the satellite. To reduce the complexity, the gravity source is placed at the center of the coordinate system. The position of the satellite then can be described as:

$$P_s(x,y) \tag{1}$$

The velocity of the satellite than can be written as

$$V_{s2}(u, v) = \frac{(P_{s2}(x, y) - P_{s1}(x, y))}{t} \quad (2)$$

For acceleration, at all times, the satellite is subjected to the gravitational pull of the gravity source; by combining the newton's first law and gravitational law; the acceleration on the satellite can be obtained by the equation below.

$$a = -\frac{GM}{r^2} \quad (3)$$

Knowing the gravity source is placed at the origin of the coordinate system; the acceleration vector can be broken down to:

$$a_x = -\frac{GMx}{r^3} \quad (4)$$

$$a_y = -\frac{GMy}{r^3} \quad (5)$$

Where:

$$r = \sqrt{x^2 + y^2} \quad (6)$$

Using first order direct integration method; assuming the time step is sufficiently small; the velocity and position of the satellite of the next time step then can be written as:

$$V_{s2}(u, v) = V_{s1}(u, v) + a_t(a_x, a_y)\Delta t \quad (7)$$

$$P_{s2}(x, y) = P_{s1}(x, y) + V_{s2}(u, v)\Delta t \quad (8)$$

2.2.2 Satellite initialization

To initialize the satellite, the position and the velocity of the satellite must be determined. In this software, the satellite is automatically initialized with a circular orbit. The circular orbit is calculated by coupling the centripetal acceleration to gravitational acceleration equation to obtain the orbiting velocity.

$$\frac{V^2}{r} = -\frac{GM}{r^2} \quad (9)$$

$$V = \sqrt{\frac{GM}{r}} \quad (10)$$

To simplify the initialization process, the satellite is always initialized with counter clockwise rotation on the positive x-axis; thus, the initial condition of the satellite will be:

$$P_{s0}(r_0, 0) \quad (11)$$

$$V_{s0}(0, -\sqrt{\frac{GM}{r_0}}) \quad (12)$$

2.2.3 Hohmann Transfer

The Hohmann transfer function is achieved by the user adjust the target radius of the orbit. The software will calculate the ΔV required for switching to or from the elliptical transfer orbit. Using the above equation the velocity of the current and target circular orbit V_{o1} , V_{o2} can be obtained from the given orbit height. To construct the transfer orbit, the eccentricity of the ellipse can be written as:

$$e = \frac{(r_a - r_p)}{(r_a + r_p)} \quad (13)$$

Where the perigee and apogee distance of the ellipse correspond to the current and target radius of the circular orbit. As the radius to the periapsis is given by:

$$r_p = \frac{h^2}{GM(1 + e)} \quad (14)$$

Where h is the angular momentum: $h = \sqrt{GM}r$ for circular orbit; combining the above equations, the velocity of the satellite at any location can be represented by:

$$V = \sqrt{GM\left(\frac{2}{r} - \frac{2}{r_a + r_p}\right)} \quad (15)$$

At the transfer altitude, the velocity of the satellite will be:

$$V_{apo} = \sqrt{GM\left(\frac{2}{r_a} - \frac{2}{r_a + r_p}\right)} \quad (16)$$

$$V_{peri} = \sqrt{GM\left(\frac{2}{r_p} - \frac{2}{r_a + r_p}\right)} \quad (17)$$

The above equation can also be obtained through Vis-Viva equation.

Adapting the equation to the cartesian coordinate established earlier, the velocity of the satellite can be expressed by the equation below:

$$V_x = \frac{x}{r} \sqrt{GM\left(\frac{2}{r} - \frac{2}{r_a + r_p}\right)} \quad (18)$$

$$V_y = \frac{y}{r} \sqrt{GM\left(\frac{2}{r} - \frac{2}{r_a + r_p}\right)} \quad (19)$$

The ΔV required for the two operations then can be obtained by:

$$\Delta V_1 = V_{apo} - V_{o1} \quad (20)$$

$$\Delta V_2 = V_{s2} - V_{peri} \quad (21)$$

For the simulation, when the user initiated the transfer operation, the velocity of the satellite will be updated to the transfer orbit velocity and the perigee and apogee simulate the impulse burn.

2.2.4 User Control Consideration

vis-viva equation

$$\varepsilon = \frac{V^2}{2} - \frac{GM}{r} \quad (22)$$

The vis-viva equation is used to indicate the state of the orbit. The equation is derived based on the energy law to compare the kinetic energy to the gravitational potential. If the initial gravitational energy of the satellite is equal or lower than the kinetic energy; the user will be prompted with the vis-viva result turning red indicating the satellite escaping.

Kepler's 3rd law

$$T = \frac{2\pi}{\sqrt{GM}} a^{\frac{3}{2}} \quad (23)$$

where

$$a = \frac{2}{\frac{2}{r} - \frac{V^2}{GM}} \quad (24)$$

Kepler's third law is used to compute the period time of the satellite for completing one orbit. The semi-major axis is computed once based on the vis-viva equation with the current velocity and radius of the satellite. In the software; the period time is calculated in frame rate to make the result independent from the capacity of the computer. the semi-major axis is calculated though the orbit condition.

3 Design and Development

The OrbitSim desktop application is developed using C++ programming language. To create the graphical user interface, the SFML graphics library is used. The source code is present in the appendix and the Visual Studio project can be accessed from the following github repository [OrbitSim](#).

3.1 Identified Requirements

The following are the identified requirements to build an interactive system to observe the satellite.

1. **Function 1:** The user shall be able to manually control the velocity and adjust the orbit of the satellite.
2. **Function 2:** The user shall be able to adjust the target orbit radius after the Hohmann transfer.
3. **Function 3:** The user shall be able to reset the satellite or normalize the satellite orbit into a circular orbit after manual manipulation of the orbit
4. **Function 4:** The user presses ‘T’ to conduct the transfer instantaneously. The console window prompts the user the stage of the transfer. During the transfer all other functions outside normalize and reset are disabled
5. **Function 5:** The user shall be able to zoom in and out of the frame using scroll wheel.

3.2 Numerical Implementation

This class “GravitySource” as seen in Figure 1, represents a body with gravitational influence. It stores position and strength parameters, along with graphical attributes. The constructor initializes these properties, setting the position and strength based on input values. It also configures a graphical representation of the celestial body using the SFML library. The render method displays the graphical representation on a given window.

```

1  class GravitySource{
2      sf::Vector2f pos; sf::Vector2f pos_e;
3      float strength;
4      sf::CircleShape s; sf::Texture texture_earth;
5  public:
6      GravitySource(float pos_x, float pos_y, float strength){
7          pos.x = pos_x; pos.y = pos_y;
8          this->strength = strength;
9          pos_e.x = pos_x - 30; pos_e.y = pos_y - 30;
10         s.setPosition(pos_e);
11         s.setRadius(30);
12     }
13     void render(sf::RenderWindow& wind){
14         wind.draw(s);
15     }
16     sf::Vector2f get_pos(){
17         return pos;
18     }
19     float get_strength(){
20         return strength;
21     }
22 };

```

Figure 1: Code snippet for the defined gravity source.

The “Particle” class as seen in Figure 5 simulates an object in space. It contains position, velocity, and path data, along with methods for rendering and physics updates. The constructor initializes position and velocity. The “update_physics” function calculates gravitational acceleration from a given GravitySource, updating velocity and position over time.

```

1  class Particle {
2      sf::CircleShape s;
3      std::vector<sf::Vector2f> path;
4  public:
5      sf::Vector2f pos; sf::Vector2f vel; sf::Vector2f pos_s;
6      Particle(float pos_x, float pos_y, float vel_x, float vel_y) {
7          pos.x = pos_x; pos.y = pos_y; pos_s.x = pos.x - 6;
8          pos_s.y = pos.y - 6;
9          vel.x = vel_x; vel.y = vel_y;
10         s.setPosition(pos_s); s.setFillColor(sf::Color::Red); s.setRadius(6);
11     }
12     void render(sf::RenderWindow& wind) {
13         s.setPosition(pos_s);
14         wind.draw(s);
15
16         for (size_t i = 1; i < path.size(); ++i) {
17             sf::Vertex line[] = {
18                 sf::Vertex(path[i - 1], sf::Color::White),
19                 sf::Vertex(path[i], sf::Color::White)
20             }; wind.draw(line, 2, sf::Lines);
21         }
22     void set_color(sf::Color col) {
23         s.setFillColor(col);
24     }
25     void update_physics(GravitySource& s, float dt) {
26         float distance_x = s.get_pos().x - pos.x;
27         float distance_y = s.get_pos().y - pos.y;
28
29         float distance = sqrt(distance_x * distance_x + distance_y * distance_y);
30         float inverse_distance = 1.f / distance;
31         float normalized_x = inverse_distance * distance_x;
32         float normalized_y = inverse_distance * distance_y;
33         float inverse_square_dropoff = inverse_distance * inverse_distance;
34         float acceleration_x = normalized_x * s.get_strength() * inverse_square_dropoff;
35         float acceleration_y = normalized_y * s.get_strength() * inverse_square_dropoff;
36         vel.x += acceleration_x * dt; vel.y += acceleration_y * dt;
37
38         pos.x += vel.x * dt; pos.y += vel.y * dt;
39         pos_s.x = pos.x - 6; pos_s.y = pos.y - 6;
40         path.push_back(pos);
41         if (path.size() > 20000)
42             path.erase(path.begin()); // Remove the oldest position
43     }
44 };
45

```

Figure 2: Code snippet for particle class.

3.2.1 Hohmann Transfer Implementation - Mode 1

Mode 1 in OrbitSim is the implementation of Hohmann transfers. The Hohmann transfer is implemented within the code using a three step approach.

1. Initialization ($i == 0$)

- When i equals 0, it indicates the start of the maneuver.
- Calculates initial velocity adjustment (Dv_1) based on the current altitude (P_{abs}) and the target orbit altitude ($Target_O$).
- Adjusts the particle's velocity to match Dv_1 , preparing for the transition to the target orbit.
- Sets the state (i) to 1 to proceed to the next step.
- In the case of the simulation the gravitation strength is set to 6500.

```
1      {  
2      P_abs_tf = P_abs;  
3      Dv_1 = sqrt(6500 * (2 / P_abs_tf - 2 / (P_abs_tf + Target_O)));  
4      Dv_2 = sqrt(6500 / Target_O);  
5      particles[0].vel.x = Dv_1 * V_x / V_abs;  
6      particles[0].vel.y = Dv_1 * V_y / V_abs;  
7      i = 1;  
8      }
```

Figure 3: Code snippet for first burn.

2. Transfer ($i == 1$)

- When i equals 1, it indicates that the initial velocity adjustment has been applied, and the particle is transitioning towards the target orbit.
- Checks if the particle's altitude is within a small tolerance (0.1) of the target orbit altitude ($Target_O$).
- If the conditions are met, adjusts the particle's velocity to a final adjustment (Dv_2) to achieve a stable orbit at the target altitude.
- Sets the state (i) to 2 to indicate completion of this step.

```
1      if (-0.1 < P_abs - Target_O && P_abs - Target_O < 0.1 && i == 1){  
2      particles[0].vel.x = Dv_2 * V_x / V_abs;  
3      particles[0].vel.y = Dv_2 * V_y / V_abs;  
4      i = 2;  
5      }
```

Figure 4: Code snippet for the second burn.

3. Final Adjustment (i == 2)

- When i equals 2, it indicates that the particle's velocity has been adjusted for stable orbit at the target altitude.
- Checks if the particle's altitude is within a very small tolerance (0.01) of the target orbit altitude (*TargetO*).
- If the conditions are met, adjusts the particle's velocity to align with the circular orbit at the target altitude.
- Sets the state (i) to 3 to complete the maneuver.

```
1  if (-0.01 < P_abs - Target_0 && P_abs - Target_0 < 0.01 && i == 2){
2  particles[0].vel = sf::Vector2f((P_y - win_y / 2) / P_abs * sqrt(6500 / P_abs),
3  -(P_x - win_x / 2) / P_abs * sqrt(6500 / P_abs));
4  i = 3;
5  }
```

Figure 5: Code snippet for trim error correction.

3.2.2 User Controlled Burn - Mode 2

Mode 2 in the OrbitSim desktop applications allows the user to accelerate the body on demand. This is done using the left and right arrow keys on the keyboard. The theory discussed in Section 2.2 is used to write the code seen in Figure 6. Equation 18 and Equation 19 are used to write the following part of the code which allows the user to control the particle body trajectory.

```
1  if (sf::Keyboard::isKeyPressed(sf::Keyboard::Left) && i != 0 && i != 1){
2  // tangent burn
3  particles[0].vel.x += 0.1f * V_x / V_abs;
4  particles[0].vel.y += 0.1f * V_y / V_abs;
5  i = 10;
6  }
7  else if (sf::Keyboard::isKeyPressed(sf::Keyboard::Right) && i != 0 && i != 1){
8  particles[0].vel.x -= 0.1f * V_x / V_abs;
9  particles[0].vel.y -= 0.1f * V_y / V_abs;
10 i = 10;
11 }
```

Figure 6: Code snippet for user controlled burn.

Once the user has changed the trajectory, the application also has the functionality to force the particle body into a circular orbit. This is implemented using the code seen in Figure 7.

```
1  if(sf::Keyboard::isKeyPressed(sf::Keyboard::Space)){
2  particles[0].vel = sf::Vector2f((P_y - win_y / 2) / P_abs * sqrt(6500 / P_abs),
3  -(P_x - win_x / 2) / P_abs * sqrt(6500 / P_abs));
4  i = 3;
5  }
```

Figure 7: Code snippet for normalizing current orbit into a circular orbit.

The graphics and user interface is constructed using the SFML library; the detail of the section can be seen in the appendix.

3.3 Graphical Implementation

The graphical implementation is done using the SFML library. Different elements are defined within the code, for example real time progress data, static labels/information and graphical images and then rendered on the screen using the draw feature in the SFML library.

```
1  position2.setFont(font);
2  position2.setString("position y : " + pos_y_string);
3  position2.setCharacterSize(info_char_size);
4  position2.setFillColor(sf::Color::Green);
5  position2.setPosition(info_x + 220, 800);
6  //===== DRAW INFORMATION
7  window.draw(position2);
8  //===== END OF DATA PRINTING
9  window.display();
10 t += dt * timeScale;
```

Figure 8: Graphical implementation for rendering the user interface elements

4 Results

Figure 9 shows OrbitSim's GUI. The central simulation area visualizes orbital paths, while real-time data such as target radius and normalized position/velocity are displayed on the left. On the right, controls legends allow users to adjust parameters like orbit radius and manage actions such as prograde and retrograde burn.

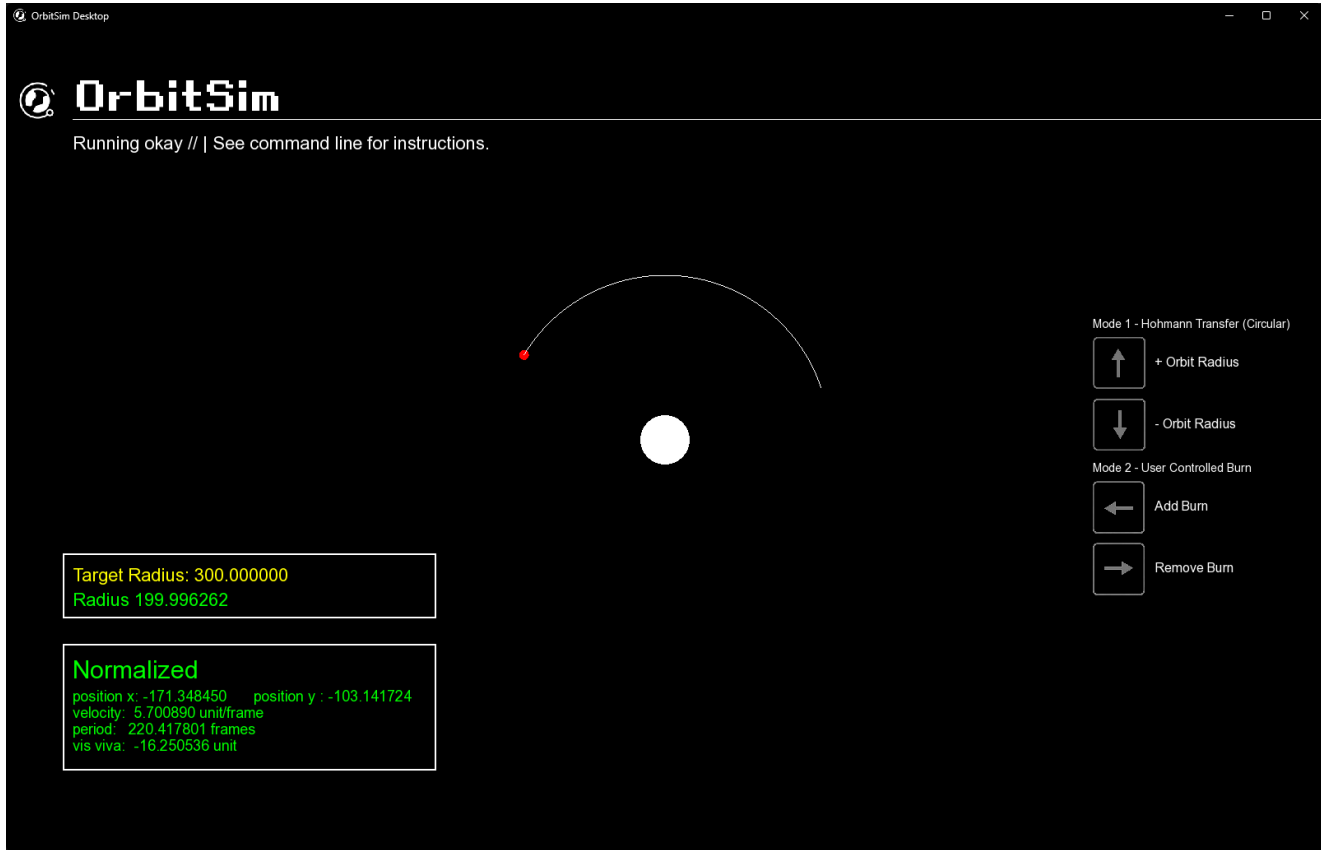
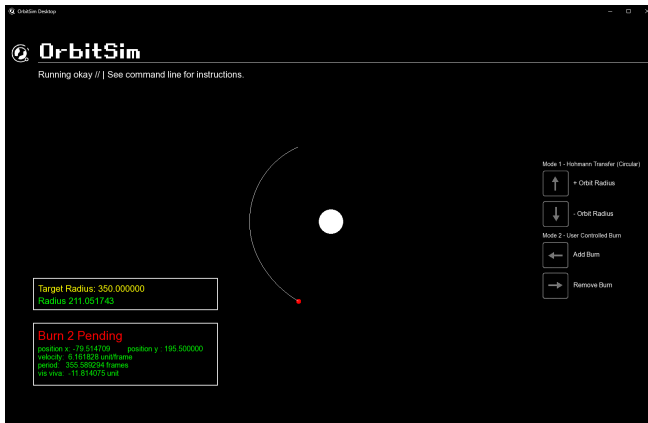
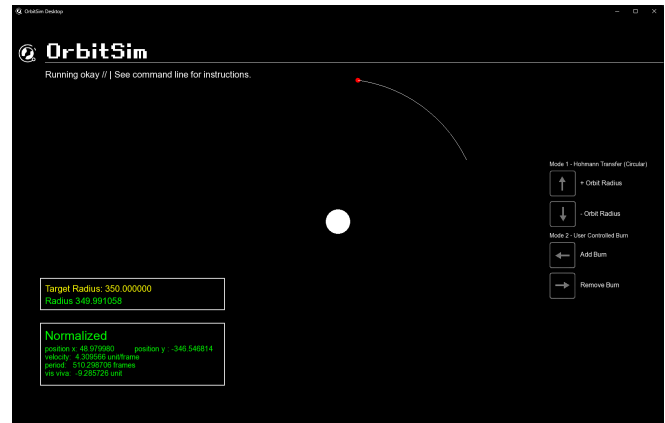


Figure 9: Graphical User Interface - Initial State.

Figure 10a illustrates the body element in an elliptical transfer orbit and Figure 10b shows the body in the final orbit defined by the user. The real time data can be seen on the screen as well showing the current radius of the body as well as the target radius of the body. In Figure 10a, it can be observed that the current radius of the body is different from the target radius. Additionally, the status of the orbit transfer shows that the 2nd Hohmann transfer burn is still pending, meaning that the body is currently in the state of transfer, and in an elliptical transfer orbit. As soon as the second burn is completed, the transfer status goes back to a normal state. This can be seen in Figure 10b where the orbit radius is stable and the current radius is within the tolerance limit of the target radius.



(a) Body in transfer orbit.



(b) Body in the user-defined target orbit.

Figure 10: OrbitSim showing different transfer phases.

Figure 11 show the instructions that are printed in the console window of the desktop application for a new user to understand the functionality.

```

1  << "INSTRUCTIONS\n"
2  << "----- \n"
3  << "Mode 1 \n"
4  << "Up arrow key to increase the target orbit radius.\n"
5  << "Down arrow key to decrease the target orbit radius.\n"
6  << "Press T to initiate orbit transfer in Mode 1 \n"
7  << "Circular orbit is required for Mode 1\n"
8  << "----- \n"
9  << "Mode 2 \n"
10 << "Left arrow key to burn prograde\n"
11 << "Right arrow key to burn retrograde\n"
12 << "Press the spacebar key to normalize the satellite to a circular orbit. \n"
13 << "----- \n"
14 << "Ctrl + scroll wheel for zooming in and zooming out. \n"
15 << "Press R to reset the orbit. \n"
16 << "===== \n";

```

Figure 11: Instructions as printed in the OrbitSim desktop application console window.

5 Discussion

During the development of the software, due to the limitation of the library function and knowledge gap, some change and concession are made to maintain the core function of the software. the details are discussed in the following paragraph.

5.1 Limitations

The following subsections discuss the limitations of the project as well as the lessons learned while developing the desktop application.

5.1.1 SFML Library Event Limitation

Initially, The is envisioned to take direct user input to set the initial condition and target orbit heights, but due to the limitation of the SFML library, this cannot be achieved. The SFML library allows the system to detect keyboard and mouse action, but user can only input value as strings which requires more manipulation to detect and filter user input error; Therefore for the robustness of the software, it is deemed a worth trade off for users to use keystrokes to manipulate target orbit radius as a slider. However, custom initialization of the satellite could not be achieved thus it is abandoned for the scope of the project.

5.1.2 Frame Capture Performance

During testing it is found that the sometime the software could not capture the exact frame when an action is require. Initially the basing physics on frame rate was suspected to be cause of the problem and after the decoupling time and frame rate; the problem remained. with limited time it is deemed to be acceptable to widen the acceptable range of the frame; therefore the action could be performance more reliably. However, this introduces error into the transferring action and the error caused by this are discussed in the subsequent sections.

5.2 Error

As mentioned in the theory section, the direct integration method assumes the time step is sufficiently small that the error accumulated between each step is negligible. However, in practice the deviation caused by this error seems to be under estimated. Attempts are made to develop a higher order governing equations to reduce the accumulated error; but in practice, the development of such equation proves to be challenging to implement. Thus the direct integration method is kept; the error causes three performance problems that are discussed below.

5.2.1 Imperfect Initialization

When the satellite is initialized, even with the mathematically correct condition; the first step of the integration will cause the satellite deviate slightly as the acceleration of the first time step causes the path of the satellite to become an secant line rather than tangent. as a result, orbit shape of the satellite is

slightly compressed. To mitigate this issue, the time step size massively reduce and the current radius deviation is below 0.1 unit; this deviation is deemed acceptable for the time limitation of the project.

5.2.2 Orbit accuracy close to the gravity source

When the satellite is sufficiently close to the gravity source, the fidelity of the orbit suffers. As the distance between the gravity source and the satellite reduces, the gravitational pull and acceleration increases dramatically. For the same time step size, the velocity and the position covered between each time step increased as well. Due to this effect, the tangent path of the satellite taken causes the satellite to drift away from its initial orbit. To mitigate this effect, the lowest transferable orbit radius is set to 150 unit from the center to avoid the effect, but user can still place the satellite at lower orbit manually.

5.2.3 Transfer ΔV error and correction

Due to the first error and the frame capture problem discussed earlier, the circularized orbit is not a perfect, therefore when calculating and performing the Hohmann transfer, very small increase of the ΔV is added to compensate for the small difference caused by the imperfect orbit and after the second burn is completed; a small velocity trim is performed to reduce the error accumulated while performing the transfer.

5.3 Lessons Learned

This project has provided an opportunity to practice and utilize C++ language and learn the functions of the SFML development tool. While working on this project, the structure and function of the SFML library created many unique problem related to desired function of the program and many alternative routes and solutions are explored to either solve or bypass the issue. For, example in the early version of the code, the software had problem triggering event after a keystroke is registered. Many modifications were made to the boolean logic of the event but to problem remained. After two days of work it is found in the documentation that frame based logic must not be placed in the event loop for the the trigger to be reliable. It is suspected that due to the compiling method used by the SFML development kit that to optimise performance, the event loop is only active when input is detected. Thus keeping the boolean logic inside the event loop will cause it to be skipped from the main loop if at the triggering time no other user inputs are made to the program. However, the triggering condition still need to be widened to compensate for the frame capturing performance. Many similar problems were encountered during the development and some feature such as custom initialization are abandoned due to knowledge gaps. Overall this project is a valuable experience to review c++ programming and experience software design. The developed software met the expectation of the requirement.

6 Conclusion

The development of OrbitSim led to the exploration of some key theories in orbital mechanics and the understanding of a two body universe. Different methodologies have been used to write the code which provides the users with a graphical user interface to understand how orbital mechanics functions. OrbitSim provides a platform for users to simulate orbital paths and manage various parameters effectively. The software's ability to visualize orbital transfers, manage burns, demonstrates its utility in space mission planning and analysis.

Moving forward, potential enhancements could focus on expanding the software's capabilities, improving user interface elements, and addressing any identified limitations. Overall, OrbitSim stands as a valuable tool for students and professors in the aerospace industry to explore and understand orbital mechanics in a simulated environment.

APPENDICES

A OrbitSim Source Code

```
1  #include "SFML/Graphics.hpp"
2  #include <vector>
3  #include <iostream>
4  #include <cmath>
5
6
7  class GravitySource
8  {
9      sf::Vector2f pos;
10     sf::Vector2f pos_e;
11     float strength;
12     sf::CircleShape s;
13     sf::Texture texture_earth;
14
15 public:
16     GravitySource(float pos_x, float pos_y, float strength) {
17         pos.x = pos_x;
18         pos.y = pos_y;
19         this->strength = strength;
20         pos_e.x = pos_x - 30;
21         pos_e.y = pos_y - 30;
22
23         s.setTexture(&texture_earth);
24         s.setPosition(pos_e);
25         s.setRadius(30);
26     }
27
28     void render(sf::RenderWindow& wind)
29     {
30         wind.draw(s);
31     }
32     sf::Vector2f get_pos()
33     {
34         return pos;
35     }
36     float get_strength()
37     {
38         return strength;
39     }
40
41 };
42
43
44 class Particle {
```

```

45     sf::CircleShape s;
46     std::vector<sf::Vector2f> path;
47
48 public:
49     sf::Vector2f pos;
50     sf::Vector2f vel;
51     sf::Vector2f pos_s;
52
53     Particle(float pos_x, float pos_y, float vel_x, float vel_y) {
54         pos.x = pos_x;
55         pos.y = pos_y;
56         pos_s.x = pos.x - 6;
57         pos_s.y = pos.y - 6;
58         vel.x = vel_x;
59         vel.y = vel_y;
60
61         s.setPosition(pos_s);
62         s.setFillColor(sf::Color::Red);
63         s.setRadius(6);
64     }
65
66     void render(sf::RenderWindow& wind) {
67         s.setPosition(pos_s);
68         wind.draw(s);
69
70         // Render the path as dotted lines
71         for (size_t i = 1; i < path.size(); ++i) {
72             sf::Vertex line[] = {
73                 sf::Vertex(path[i - 1], sf::Color::White),
74                 sf::Vertex(path[i], sf::Color::White)
75             };
76             wind.draw(line, 2, sf::Lines);
77         }
78     }
79
80     void set_color(sf::Color col) {
81         s.setFillColor(col);
82     }
83
84     void update_physics(GravitySource& s, float dt) {
85         float distance_x = s.get_pos().x - pos.x;
86         float distance_y = s.get_pos().y - pos.y;
87
88         float distance = sqrt(distance_x * distance_x + distance_y * distance_y);
89
90         float inverse_distance = 1.f / distance;
91
92         float normalized_x = inverse_distance * distance_x;
93         float normalized_y = inverse_distance * distance_y;

```

```

94
95         float inverse_square_dropoff = inverse_distance * inverse_distance;
96
97         float acceleration_x = normalized_x * s.get_strength() * inverse_square_dropoff;
98         float acceleration_y = normalized_y * s.get_strength() * inverse_square_dropoff;
99
100        vel.x += acceleration_x * dt;
101        vel.y += acceleration_y * dt;
102
103        pos.x += vel.x * dt;
104        pos.y += vel.y * dt;
105        pos_s.x = pos.x - 6;
106        pos_s.y = pos.y - 6;
107        path.push_back(pos);
108        // Limit the size of the path to prevent it from growing indefinitely
109        if (path.size() > 20000)
110            path.erase(path.begin()); // Remove the oldest position
111    }
112 };
113
114
115
116 int main() {
117
118     std::cout << "MIT License\n"
119     << "\n"
120     << "Copyright (c) 2024 | Paramvir Singh Lobana | Jian Jiao\n"
121     << "\n"
122     << "Permission is hereby granted, free of charge, to any person obtaining a copy\n"
123     << "of this software and associated documentation files (the \"Software\"), to deal\n"
124     << "in the Software without restriction, including without limitation the rights\n"
125     << "to use, copy, modify, merge, publish, distribute, sublicense, and/or sell\n"
126     << "copies of the Software, and to permit persons to whom the Software is\n"
127     << "furnished to do so, subject to the following conditions:\n"
128     << "\n"
129     << "The above copyright notice and this permission notice shall be included in all\n"
130     << "copies or substantial portions of the Software.\n"
131     << "\n"
132     << "===== \n"
133     << "INSTRUCTIONS\n"
134     << "----- \n"
135     << "Mode 1 \n"
136     << "Up arrow key to increase the orbit radius.\n"
137     << "Down arrow key to decrease the orbit radius.\n"
138     << "Press T to initiate orbit transfer in Mode 1 \n"
139     << "----- \n"
140     << "Mode 2 \n"
141     << "Left arrow key \n"
142     << "Right arrow key \n"

```

```

143 << "Press the spacebar key to normalize the orbit in Model 2 \n"
144 << "----- \n"
145 << "Ctrl + scroll wheel for zooming in and zooming out. \n"
146 << "===== \n";
147
148
149 // GUI Values
150 float win_x = 1600;
151 float win_y = 1000;
152 float info_x = win_x * 0.05;
153 float info_y = win_y * 0.7;
154 float info_char_size = 14 + 4;
155
156 sf::RenderWindow window(sf::VideoMode(win_x, win_y), "OrbitSim Desktop");
157 window.setFramerateLimit(60);
158 sf::View view = window.getView();
159
160 // Initialize sources and particles
161 std::vector<GravitySource> sources;
162 sources.push_back(GravitySource(win_x / 2, win_y / 2, 6500));
163
164
165 float particle_x_start = win_x / 2 + 200;
166 float particle_y_start = win_y / 2;
167 float particle_start = sqrt(pow(200, 2) + pow(0, 2));
168 std::vector<Particle> particles;
169 particles.push_back(Particle(particle_x_start, particle_y_start,
170 (particle_y_start - win_y / 2) / particle_start * sqrt(6500 / particle_start),
171 -(particle_x_start - win_x / 2) / particle_start * sqrt(6500 / particle_start)));
172
173 sf::Font font;
174 if (!font.loadFromFile("resources\\arial.ttf")) {
175     std::cerr << "Failed to load font file!\n";
176     return EXIT_FAILURE;
177 }
178 sf::Font font_orb;
179 if (!font_orb.loadFromFile("resources\\retro_gaming.ttf")) {
180     std::cerr << "Failed to load font file!\n";
181     return EXIT_FAILURE;
182 }
183
184 // setup output
185 sf::Text orbitsim;
186 sf::Text status_string;
187 sf::Text velocity;
188 sf::Text position2; sf::Text position1; sf::Text Radius;
189 sf::Text period;
190 sf::Text vis_viva;
191 sf::Text plus;

```

```

192 sf::Text minus;
193 sf::Text tsf;
194 sf::Text Target_Orbit;
195
196 // Display value
197 // float P_x = particles[0].pos.x;
198 float P_x = 0;
199 float P_y = 0;
200 float t = 1.f;
201 float V_abs = 0;
202 float Dv_1 = 0;
203 float Dv_2 = 0;
204 float P_abs = 0;
205 float P_abs_tf = 0;
206 float E_cond = 0;
207 float P_cond = 0;
208 float Target_0 = 300;
209 int i = 3;
210
211
212 float timeScale = 20.0f; // Defines how fast the particle is running
213
214 sf::Clock clock;
215 const float fixedTimeStep = 1.0f / 5000.0f; // 60 FPS
216
217
218 // Add program icon
219 sf::Image icon;
220 icon.loadFromFile("resources\\orb.png");
221 window.setIcon(icon.getSize().x, icon.getSize().y, icon.getPixelsPtr());
222
223 //define key parameters
224 float key_pos_x = 0.825; float key_pos_y = 5;
225 float key_scale_val = 0.6;
226
227 // Add key image
228 sf::Text m_1; m_1.setFont(font); m_1.setString("Mode 1 - Hohmann Transfer (Circular)"); m_1.setCharacterSi
229 sf::Text m_11; m_11.setFont(font); m_11.setString("+ Orbit Radius");
230 m_11.setCharacterSize(16); m_11.setPosition(win_x * key_pos_x + 75, win_y * 0.375 + 20);
231 sf::Text m_12; m_12.setFont(font); m_12.setString("- Orbit Radius");
232 m_12.setCharacterSize(16); m_12.setPosition(win_x * key_pos_x + 75, win_y * 0.45 + 20);
233 sf::Texture keys_up; sf::Sprite up_key;
234 if (!keys_up.loadFromFile("resources\\key_up.png"))
235     std::cout << "Error loading the image ... " << std::endl;
236 up_key.setTexture(keys_up); up_key.setPosition
237 (sf::Vector2f(win_x * key_pos_x, win_y * 0.375)); up_key.setScale(key_scale_val, key_scale_val);
238
239
240 sf::Texture keys_down; sf::Sprite down_key;

```



```

241 if (!keys_down.loadFromFile("resources\\key_down.png")) std::cout << "Error loading the image ... " << std
242 down_key.setTexture(keys_down); down_key.setPosition(sf::Vector2f(win_x * key_pos_x, win_y * 0.45)); down_
243
244 sf::Text m_2; m_2.setFont(font); m_2.setString("Mode 2 - User Controlled Burn"); m_2.setCharacterSize(14);
245 sf::Text m_21; m_21.setFont(font); m_21.setString("Add Burn"); m_21.setCharacterSize(16); m_21.setPosition
246 sf::Text m_22; m_22.setFont(font); m_22.setString("Remove Burn"); m_22.setCharacterSize(16); m_22.setPosit
247 sf::Texture keys_l; sf::Sprite left_key;
248 if (!keys_l.loadFromFile("resources\\key_left.png"))
249 std::cout << "Error loading the image ... " << std::endl;
250 left_key.setTexture(keys_l); left_key.setPosition
251 (sf::Vector2f(win_x * key_pos_x, win_y * 0.55)); left_key.setScale(key_scale_val, key_scale_val);
252
253 sf::Texture keys_r; sf::Sprite right_key;
254 if (!keys_r.loadFromFile("resources\\key_right.png"))
255 std::cout << "Error loading the image ... " << std::endl;
256 right_key.setTexture(keys_r); right_key.setPosition
257 (sf::Vector2f(win_x * key_pos_x, win_y * 0.625)); right_key.setScale(key_scale_val, key_scale_val);
258
259 sf::Texture logo; sf::Sprite logo_orb;
260 if (!logo.loadFromFile("resources\\orb.png"))
261 std::cout << "Error loading the image ... " << std::endl;
262 logo_orb.setTexture(logo); logo_orb.setPosition
263 (sf::Vector2f(15, win_y * 0.05 + 15)); logo_orb.setScale(0.7, 0.7);
264
265 while (window.isOpen()) {
266 sf::Time deltaTime = clock.restart();
267 float accumulator = deltaTime.asSeconds();
268 float dt = std::min(accumulator, fixedTimeStep);
269
270 while (accumulator > 0) {
271
272 // Handle events
273 sf::Event event;
274
275 P_x = particles[0].pos.x;
276 P_y = particles[0].pos.y;
277 P_abs = sqrt(pow(P_x - win_x / 2, 2) + pow(P_y - win_y / 2, 2));
278 // calculate for tangency
279 float V_x = particles[0].vel.x;
280 float V_y = particles[0].vel.y;
281 V_abs = sqrt(pow(V_x, 2) + pow(V_y, 2));
282
283 while (window.pollEvent(event))
284
285 {
286     if (event.type == sf::Event::Closed)
287         window.close();
288
289     if (sf::Keyboard::isKeyPressed(sf::Keyboard::Escape))

```

```

290         window.close();
291
292
293
294
295     // Manual input of control
296     if (sf::Keyboard::isKeyPressed(sf::Keyboard::Left) && i != 0 && i != 1)
297     {
298         // tangent burn
299         particles[0].vel.x += 0.1f * V_x / V_abs;
300         particles[0].vel.y += 0.1f * V_y / V_abs;
301         i = 10;
302     }
303     else if (sf::Keyboard::isKeyPressed(sf::Keyboard::Right) && i != 0 && i != 1)
304     {
305         particles[0].vel.x -= 0.1f * V_x / V_abs;
306         particles[0].vel.y -= 0.1f * V_y / V_abs;
307         i = 10;
308     }
309
310     // Normalize based on altitude
311
312     if (sf::Keyboard::isKeyPressed(sf::Keyboard::Space))
313     {
314         particles[0].vel = sf::Vector2f((P_y - win_y / 2) / P_abs
315 * sqrt(6500 / P_abs), -(P_x - win_x / 2) / P_abs * sqrt(6500 / P_abs));
316         i = 3;
317     }
318
319
320
321     else if (sf::Keyboard::isKeyPressed(sf::Keyboard::Up) && i != 0 && i != 1)
322
323
324     {
325         if (Target_0 < 350)
326             Target_0++;
327     }
328
329
330     else if (sf::Keyboard::isKeyPressed(sf::Keyboard::Down) && i != 0 && i != 1)
331
332
333     {
334         if (Target_0 > 150)
335             Target_0--;
336     }
337
338

```

```

339     // Change velocity of the first particle if T
340     if (sf::Keyboard::isKeyPressed(sf::Keyboard::T) && i == 3)
341     {
342
343         i = 0;
344     }
345
346     if (sf::Keyboard::isKeyPressed(sf::Keyboard::R))
347     {
348         particles[0].pos = sf::Vector2f(win_x / 2 - 200, win_y / 2);
349         particles[0].vel = sf::Vector2f((particles[0].pos.y - win_y / 2)
350 / sqrt(pow(200,2)) * sqrt(6500 / pow(200, 2)), -(particles[0].pos.x - win_x / 2)
351 / sqrt(pow(200, 2)) * sqrt(6500 / sqrt(pow(200, 2)))));
352         i = 3;
353
354     }
355
356     // Zoom in
357
358     if (event.type == sf::Event::MouseWheelScrolled && event.mouseWheelScroll.wheel == sf::Mouse::Vertical)
359     {
360         if (sf::Keyboard::isKeyPressed(sf::Keyboard::LControl) || sf::Keyboard::isKeyPressed(sf::Keyboard::RControl))
361         {
362             if (event.mouseWheelScroll.delta > 0)
363                 view.zoom(0.9f);
364             else if (event.mouseWheelScroll.delta < 0)
365                 view.zoom(1.1f);
366
367             window.setView(view);
368         }
369     }
370
371 }
372
373 // moved outside event loop to fix mouse bug
374
375 if (i == 0)
376 {
377     P_abs_tf = P_abs;
378     Dv_1 = 1.0001 * sqrt(6500 * (2 / P_abs_tf - 2 / (P_abs_tf + Target_0)));
379     Dv_2 = sqrt(6500 / Target_0);
380     particles[0].vel.x = Dv_1 * V_x / V_abs;
381     particles[0].vel.y = Dv_1 * V_y / V_abs;
382     i = 1;
383 }
384
385 if (-0.2 < P_abs - Target_0 && P_abs - Target_0 < 0.2 && i == 1)
386 {
387     particles[0].vel.x = Dv_2 * V_x / V_abs;

```

```

388     particles[0].vel.y = Dv_2 * V_y / V_abs;
389     i = 2;
390 }
391
392 if (-0.001 < P_abs - Target_0 && P_abs - Target_0 < 0.001 && i == 2)
393 {
394     particles[0].vel = sf::Vector2f((P_y - win_y / 2) / P_abs * sqrt(6500 / P_abs), -(P_x - win_x / 2) / P_abs);
395     i = 3;
396 }
397
398
399
400
401
402
403
404 // Update physics
405 for (auto& source : sources) {
406     for (auto& particle : particles) {
407         particle.update_physics(source, dt * timeScale);
408     }
409 }
410 accumulator -= dt;
411 // Render
412 }
413
414 window.clear();
415 for (auto& source : sources)
416 {
417     source.render(window);
418 }
419 for (auto& particle : particles)
420 {
421     particle.render(window);
422 }
423
424 // ===== PRINT SOFTWARE INFO =====
425 orbitsim.setFont(font_orb);
426 orbitsim.setString("OrbitSim");
427 orbitsim.setCharacterSize(50);
428 orbitsim.setFillColor(sf::Color::White);
429 orbitsim.setPosition(win_x * 0.05, win_y * 0.05);
430
431 status_string.setFont(font);
432 status_string.setString("Running okay // | See command line for instructions.");
433 status_string.setCharacterSize(info_char_size + 4);
434 status_string.setFillColor(sf::Color::White);
435 status_string.setPosition(win_x * 0.05, win_y * 0.05 + 75);
436

```

```

437
438 sf::VertexArray lines(sf::LinesStrip, 2);
439 lines[0].position = sf::Vector2f(win_x * 0.05, win_y * 0.11);
440 lines[1].position = sf::Vector2f(win_x * 1, win_y * 0.11);
441
442 sf::RectangleShape rect(sf::Vector2f(450.f, 75.f));
443 rect.setPosition(sf::Vector2f(info_x - 10, 650 - 10)); rect.setFillColor(sf::Color::Transparent); rect.set
444
445 sf::RectangleShape rect2(sf::Vector2f(450.f, 150.f));
446 rect2.setPosition(sf::Vector2f(info_x - 10, 760 - 10)); rect2.setFillColor(sf::Color::Transparent); rect2.
447 // ===== END OF SOFTWARE INFO =====
448 //===== START OF DATA PRINTING =====
449 std::string t_string;
450 t_string = std::to_string(t);
451
452 // Display Pos
453
454 std::string P_abs_string;
455 P_abs_string = std::to_string(P_abs);
456 std::string pos_x_string;
457 pos_x_string = std::to_string(P_x - win_x / 2);
458 std::string pos_y_string;
459 pos_y_string = std::to_string(P_y - win_y / 2);
460
461
462 position1.setFont(font);
463 position1.setString("position x: " + pos_x_string);
464 position1.setCharacterSize(info_char_size);
465 position1.setFillColor(sf::Color::Green);
466 position1.setPosition(info_x, 800);
467
468 position2.setFont(font);
469 position2.setString("position y : " + pos_y_string);
470 position2.setCharacterSize(info_char_size);
471 position2.setFillColor(sf::Color::Green);
472 position2.setPosition(info_x + 220, 800);
473
474
475
476 // Display Time Period
477 //position.setFont(font);
478 //position.setString("Time: " + t_string + " s");
479 //position.setCharacterSize(info_char_size);
480 //position.setFillColor(sf::Color::Green);
481 //position.setPosition(info_x, 800);
482
483 // Display Vel
484
485 float V_x = particles[0].vel.x;

```

```

486 float V_y = particles[0].vel.y;
487 V_abs = sqrt(pow(V_x, 2) + pow(V_y, 2));
488 std::string V_abs_string;
489 V_abs_string = std::to_string(V_abs);
490
491 velocity.setFont(font);
492 velocity.setString("velocity: " + V_abs_string + " unit/frame");
493 velocity.setCharacterSize(info_char_size);
494 velocity.setFillColor(sf::Color::Green);
495 velocity.setPosition(info_x, 820);
496 // setup velocity indication
497 plus.setFont(font);
498 plus.setString("Prograde");
499 plus.setCharacterSize(info_char_size + 2);
500 plus.setFillColor(sf::Color::Red);
501 plus.setPosition(info_x + 300, 820);
502
503 minus.setFont(font);
504 minus.setString("Retrograde");
505 minus.setCharacterSize(info_char_size + 2);
506 minus.setFillColor(sf::Color::Red);
507 minus.setPosition(info_x + 300, 820);
508
509 // Display period
510 float a = 0;
511 a = 1 / ((2.0f / P_abs) - (pow(V_abs, 2) / 6500.0f));
512 P_cond = ((2 * 3.1415926) / sqrt(6500.0f)) * pow(a, 1.5);
513 std::string P_cond_string;
514 P_cond_string = std::to_string(P_cond);
515 period.setFont(font);
516 period.setString("period: " + P_cond_string + " frames");
517 period.setCharacterSize(info_char_size);
518 period.setFillColor(sf::Color::Green);
519 period.setPosition(info_x, 840);
520
521 // display vis_viva
522 E_cond = pow(V_abs, 2) * 0.5f - 6500.0f / P_abs;
523 std::string E_cond_string;
524 E_cond_string = std::to_string(E_cond);
525
526 vis_viva.setFont(font);
527 vis_viva.setString("vis viva: " + E_cond_string + " unit");
528 vis_viva.setCharacterSize(info_char_size);
529 if (E_cond < 0)
530 vis_viva.setFillColor(sf::Color::Green);
531 else
532 vis_viva.setFillColor(sf::Color::Red);
533 vis_viva.setPosition(info_x, 860);
534

```

```

535
536 if (sf::Keyboard::isKeyPressed(sf::Keyboard::Left) && i != 0 && i != 1)
537     window.draw(plus);
538
539 if (sf::Keyboard::isKeyPressed(sf::Keyboard::Right) && i != 0 && i != 1)
540     window.draw(minus);
541
542 // Display target Orb
543 std::string Target_O_string;
544 Target_O_string = std::to_string(Target_O);
545 Target_Orbit.setFont(font);
546 Target_Orbit.setString("Target Radius: " + Target_O_string);
547 Target_Orbit.setCharacterSize(info_char_size + 4);
548 Target_Orbit.setFillColor(sf::Color::Yellow);
549 Target_Orbit.setPosition(info_x, 650);
550
551 Radius.setFont(font);
552 Radius.setString("Radius " + P_abs_string);
553 Radius.setCharacterSize(info_char_size + 4);
554 Radius.setFillColor(sf::Color::Green);
555 Radius.setPosition(info_x, 680);
556
557 // display tsf
558 tsf.setFont(font);
559 if (i == 0)
560 {
561     tsf.setString("Burn 1");
562     tsf.setFillColor(sf::Color::Red);
563 }
564 if (i == 1)
565 {
566     tsf.setString("Burn 2 Pending");
567     tsf.setFillColor(sf::Color::Red);
568 }
569 if (i >= 2 && i < 3)
570 {
571     tsf.setString("Trim adjustment Pending");
572     tsf.setFillColor(sf::Color::Yellow);
573 }
574
575 if (i == 3)
576 {
577     tsf.setString("Normalized");
578     tsf.setFillColor(sf::Color::Green);
579 }
580
581 if (i == 10)
582 {
583     tsf.setString("Cannot transfer; Normalize");

```

```

584 tsf.setFillColor(sf::Color::Red);
585 }
586 tsf.setCharacterSize(30);
587
588 tsf.setPosition(info_x, 760);
589 // Other info to be printed
590
591
592 //===== DRAW INFORMATION =====
593 window.draw(orbitsim);
594 window.draw(status_string);
595 window.draw(rect); window.draw(rect2);
596 window.draw(logo_orb);
597 window.draw(up_key); window.draw(down_key); window.draw(right_key); window.draw(left_key);
598 window.draw(m_1); window.draw(m_2); window.draw(m_11); window.draw(m_12); window.draw(m_21); window.draw(m_22);
599 window.draw(lines);
600 window.draw(tsf);
601 window.draw(velocity);
602 window.draw(position2); window.draw(position1); window.draw(Radius); window.draw(Target_Orbit);
603 window.draw(period);
604 window.draw(vis_viva);
605 //===== END OF DATA PRINTING =====
606
607
608 window.display();
609
610 t += dt * timeScale;
611 }
612
613 return 0;
614 }

```
