

# SAMUEL M. FACTOR

## *Curriculum Vitae*

Univ. of Texas at Austin Dept. of Astronomy, 2515 Speedway, Stop C1400, Austin, TX 78712

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### EDUCATION

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- The University of Texas at Austin**, Austin, TX  
**Ph.D.**, Astronomy (Advisor: Dr. Adam Kraus) 2023  
Dissertation Title: *Kernel-Phase Interferometry for Detection of Close in Companions: Demographics of Binary Brown Dwarfs from Birth to Maturity*
- Wesleyan University**, Middletown, CT  
**M.A.**, Astronomy (Advisor: Dr. A. Meredith Hughes) 2015  
Thesis Title: *ALMA Observations of Molecular Gas Emission from a Protoplanetary Disk in the Orion Nebula*
- B.A.**, Physics and Computer Science,  $\Phi$ BK Honor Society, GPA: 3.93 2014

### RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

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- Postdoctoral Fellow** Advisor: Dr. Adam L. Kraus 2023–present  
*Department of Astronomy, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX*
  - Applying an interferometric analysis technique to calibration data to assess the strengths, weaknesses, and best practice observing strategies for JWST KPI imaging.
- Graduate Student Researcher** Advisor: Dr. Adam L. Kraus 2015–2023  
*Department of Astronomy, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX*
  - Applying an interferometric analysis technique to archival HST imaging to search for sub-stellar and planetary mass companions to nearby stars below the diffraction limit.
  - Demographic analysis of companions in the field and young star-forming regions.
  - Analysis utilized the Lonestar5 & 6 clusters at the Texas Advanced Computing Center (TACC).
- Graduate Student Researcher** Advisor: Dr. A. Meredith Hughes 2014–2015  
*Astronomy Department, Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT*
  - Modeled the temperature and density structure of a protoplanetary disk in the Orion Nebula Cluster using Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array observations of molecular gas.
  - Analysis utilized Wesleyan University's High Performance Compute Cluster.
- Undergraduate Research Assistant** Advisor: Dr. Fred Ellis 2012–2014  
*Physics Department, Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT*
  - Built and tested the scattering properties of electronic circuits modeling optical systems.
  - Research topics include: PT-symmetric systems, asymmetric wave transport, nonlinear systems.

### HONORS & AWARDS

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- Board of Visitors Graduate Student Second Year Research Defense Award**, UT Austin 2017
- Chambliss Astronomy Achievement Award**, Honorable Mention, AAS Winter, 2016
- Frank N. Edmonds, Jr. Memorial Fellowship in Astronomy**, UT Austin 2016
- $\Phi$ BK**, Wesleyan University Spring, 2014
- Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship**, Honorable Mention 2013
- Karl Van Dyke Prize**, Wesleyan University Physics Dept. 2013
- Dean's List**, Wesleyan University 2010 - 2014

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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**Institute for Scientist & Engineer Educators Professional Development Prog.** 2018,2020(canceled)  
Intensive teaching workshop focusing on inquiry, equity & inclusion, and assessment.

**Teaching Assistant** *Department of Astronomy, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX*

AST 307: Introductory Astronomy, Prof. Brendan Bowler	Fall 2020
AST 376/392G: Observational Methods in Astronomy, Profs. A. Kraus & S. Finkelstein	Fall 2018
AST 301: Introduction to Astronomy, Prof. John Scalo	Fall 2015

**Teaching Assistant** *Astronomy Department, Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT*

ASTR 107: The Universe, ASTR 211: Observational Astronomy, Prof. A. Meredith Hughes	2014–2015
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**Course Assistant** *Computer Science and Physics Departments, Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT*

COMP 112: Intro. to Programming, Prof. James Lipton	Summer 2012
PHYS 215: Special Relativity, Prof. Fred Ellis	Fall 2013

## OUTREACH AND SERVICE

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**Astronomy on Tap, Austin TX**, Organizing Committee and Speaker 2016–Present  
Present free, accessible astronomy talks in a bar to ~ 300 people monthly. Watch my talks on [my website](#).

**Astrobites**, Author and Webmaster 2018–2019  
Wrote brief paper summaries accessible to undergraduate level students. Read my posts on [astrobites.org](#)

**Graduate Student Observing Trip**, Trip Leader 2023  
Co-lead trip to McDonald Observatory to teach early career graduate students about observing

**TAURUS Summer Program**, Observing Trip Committee, Webmaster, Informal Mentor 2017, 2019, 2021  
Organized and lead the REU program's observing trip to McDonald Observatory.

**UT Austin Girl Day Festival**, Volunteer 2017, 2018, 2021, 2023  
Facilitated hands on astronomy activities for over 8,000 middle school girls and their families.

**Astronomy Graduate Student Executive Committee**, UT Austin, Computer Officer 2017–2021

**Ask an Astronomer**, Author, [askanastronomer.org](#) 2015–2016

**Public Observing**, Van Vleck Observatory, Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT 2014–2015

## FUNDING

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<i>Kernel-Phase Detection Limits for Planet Discovery with JWST</i>	\$145,090
PI of Cycle 1 James Webb Space Telescope Archival Research Grant 2509	2021

<i>Discovery of Young Planetary Systems with Kernel-Phase Interferometry</i>	\$114,085
PI of Cycle 29 Hubble Space Telescope Archival Research Grant 16612	2021

<i>University Graduate Continuing Fellowship</i>	\$40,804
The University of Texas at Austin Graduate School	2018

<i>Kernel-Phase Interferometry for Super-resolution Detection of Faint Companions</i>	\$141,430
PI of Cycle 24 Hubble Space Telescope Archival Research Grant 14561	2016

<i>John W. Cox Graduate Excellence Fellowship</i>	\$18,000
University of Texas at Austin Dept. of Astronomy recruiting Fellowship	2015

<i>Travel to: 225th Meeting of the American Astronomical Society</i>	\$1,000
PI of Student Travel Grant, CT Space Grant College Consortium	2015

## PUBLICATIONS

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- S. Factor** & A. L. Kraus, 2023, *AJ*, 165, 130, “[NICMOS Kernel-Phase Interferometry II: Demographics of Nearby Brown Dwarfs](#)”
- S. Factor** & A. L. Kraus, 2022, *AJ*, 164, 244, “[NICMOS Kernel-Phase Interferometry I: Catalogue of Brown Dwarfs Observed in F110W and F170M](#)”
- S. Factor**, A. M. Hughes, K. Flaherty, R. K. Mann, J. Di Francesco, J. P. Williams, L. Ricci, B. C. Matthews, J. Bally, D. Johnstone, 2017, *AJ*, 153, 233, “[ALMA Observations of Asymmetric Molecular Gas Emission from a Protoplanetary Disk in the Orion Nebula](#)”
- A. Carter et al. (incl. **S. Factor**), 2023, *ApJL*, 951, L20, “[The JWST Early Release Science Program for Direct Observations of Exoplanetary Systems I: High Contrast Imaging of the Exoplanet HIP 65426 b from 2-16  \$\mu\text{m}\$](#) ”
- B. Miles et al. (incl. **S. Factor**), 2023, *ApJL*, 946, L6, “[The JWST Early Release Science Program for Direct Observations of Exoplanetary Systems II: A 1 to 20 Micron Spectrum of the Planetary-Mass Companion VHS 1256-1257 b](#)”
- S. Hinkley et al. (incl. **S. Factor**), 2022, *PASP*, 134, 095003, “[The JWST Early Release Science Program for the Direct Imaging & Spectroscopy of Exoplanetary Systems](#)”
- A. W. Mann et al. (incl. **S. Factor**), 2019, *ApJ*, 871, 63, “[How to Constrain Your M Dwarf. II. The Mass–Luminosity–Metallicity Relation from 0.075 to 0.70 Solar Masses](#)”
- J. M. Lee, **S. Factor**, Z. Lin, I. Vitebskiy, F. Ellis, T. Kottos, “[Reconfigurable directional lasing modes in cavities with generalized  \$\mathcal{PT}\$  Symmetry](#),” *Phys. Rev. Lett.*, vol 112, p. 253902, Jun 2014
- M. Chitsazi, **S. Factor**, J. Schindler, H. Ramezani, F. M. Ellis and T. Kottos, “[Experimental observation of lasing shutdown via asymmetric gain](#),” *Phys. Rev. A*, vol. 89, p. 043842, Apr 2014
- N. Bender, **S. Factor**, J. D. Bodyfelt, H. Ramezani, D. N. Christodulides, F. M. Ellis, and T. Kottos, “[Observation of asymmetric transport in structures with active nonlinearities](#),” *Phys. Rev. Lett.*, vol. 110, p. 234101, June 2013

## PRESENTATIONS

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- HST Kernel-Phase Interferometry: Field-Age Brown Dwarf Population Demographics ([poster](#)), *21st Cambridge Workshops of Cool Stars, Stellar Systems, and the Sun*, July 2022, Toulouse, France
- A NICMOS Kernel-Phase Interferometry Survey of Brown-Dwarf Binary Demographics ([invited talk](#)), *CfA Stars & Planets Seminar*, December 2021, Center for Astrophysics, Cambridge, MA
- A NICMOS Kernel-Phase Interferometry Survey of Brown-Dwarf Binary Demographics (invited talk), *Stars and Planets Lunch And Talks (SPLAT)*, November 2021, Institute for Astronomy, Manoa, HI
- A NICMOS Kernel-Phase Interferometry Survey of Brown-Dwarf Binary Demographics ([talk](#)), *Virtual Masking Hackathon*, July 2021, Virtual
- Kernel-Phase Interferometry for Super-Resolution Detection of Faint Companions ([poster](#)), *20.5th Cambridge Workshops of Cool Stars, Stellar Systems, and the Sun*, March 2021, Virtual
- Kernel-Phase Interferometry for Super-Resolution Detection of Faint Companions ([poster](#)), *Extreme Solar Systems IV*, August 2019, Reykjavik, Iceland
- Kernel-Phase Interferometry for Super-Resolution Detection of Faint Companions ([poster](#)), *Stars: Birth and Death, 6th Annual GMT Community Science Meeting*, September 2018, Honolulu, HI
- Kernel-Phase Interferometry for Super-Resolution Detection of Faint Companions ([poster](#)), *20th Cambridge Workshop of Cool Stars, Stellar Systems, and the Sun*, August 2018, Boston, MA

Kernel-Phase Interferometry for Super-Resolution Detection of Faint Companions ([poster](#)),  
*Star and Planet Formation in the Southwest 2*, March 2018, Oracle, AZ

Are we alone? Finding and characterizing planets around other stars (invited talk),  
*McDonald Observatory Board of Visitors Recruiting Event*, February, 2018, Houston, TX

Kernel-Phase Interferometry for Super-Resolution Detection of Faint Companions ([poster](#) number 118.03),  
*230th Meeting of the AAS*, June 2017, Austin, TX

Kernel-Phase Interferometry for Super-Resolution Detection of Faint Companions ([poster](#) number 146.25),  
*229th Meeting of the AAS*, January 2017, Grapevine, TX (Chambliss Honorable Mention)

Git is great! ([slides](#)),  
*UT Austin Graduate Student Postdoc Seminar*, November 2016, Austin, TX

Kernel-Phase Interferometry for Super-Resolution Detection of Faint Companions ([poster](#)),  
*Sagan Exoplanet Summer Workshop*, July 2016, Pasadena, CA

ALMA Observations of Molecular Gas Emission from a Protoplanetary Disk in the Orion Nebula Cluster  
([poster](#)), *Frank N. Bash Symposium*, October 2015, Austin, TX

Characterizing a Young Protoplanetary Disk in the Orion Nebula Cluster ([poster](#) number 349.06),  
*225th Meeting of the American Astronomical Society*, January 2015, Seattle, WA

## OBSERVING EXPERIENCE

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JWST Cycle 1 (Archival)	(see Funding)
HST NICMOS, ACS, Cycle 24, 29 (Archival)	(see Funding)
0.8m Telescope, PFC, McDonald Observatory (P.I. Observing Course)	>30 nights
0.9m Telescope, eyepiece, McDonald Observatory (P.I. Graduate Student Course)	4 nights
Harlan J. Smith 2.7m, DIAFI, McDonald Observatory (P.I. TAURUS, Observing Course)	4 nights
HJS 2.7m, GCMS (VIRUS-P), McDonald Observatory (P.I. TAURUS)	3 nights
HJS 2.7m, Tull Coude Spectrograph (TS23), McDonald Obs. (P.I. A. Rizzuto, Observing Course)	12 nights
Keck II, NIRC2 LGS, Mauna Kea Observatory, (P.I. A. Mann)	1 night

## PROGRAMMING LANGUAGES & SOFTWARE

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Python, Git, L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X, MIRIAD, CASA, Mathematica, C, Ruby, Rails, Java, Visual Basic, SML, Agda

## EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

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<b>Volunteer Coach</b> , Austin Rowing Club	2017–Present
<b>Certified Open Water Diver</b> , PADI (28 dives)	2013–Present
<b>Volunteer Assistant Coach</b> , Wesleyan University Men's Varsity Rowing	Fall, 2015
<b>Wesleyan University Men's Varsity Rowing</b>	2010–2014
NESCAC All Sportsmanship Team, New England Small College Athletic Conference	2014
NESCAC All Academic Team, New England Small College Athletic Conference	2012–2014
Stewards' All Academic Team, Eastern College Athletic Conference	2012–2014
New England Rowing Championships Men's JV 8+, 3rd place	2013, 2014
Head of the Charles Men's Collegiate 8+, 5th place	2013