Observing with JWST and NIRSpec





Agenda



the big picture: mission operations
 NIRSpec target acquisition
 planning MOS observations



The Observer's view





Proposals and Observation Planning





Science Operations Center





The full picture....

Observatory Issues

- Autonomous Operations
 - requires sophisticated on-board software
- Orbital constraints, target visibility
 - requires long-range planning
- Roll constraints
- Slew speed and accuracy
 - target sequence should be optimized

Observatory Issues (2/3)

- Autonomous Operations
- Orbital constraints, target visibility
- Roll constraints
- Slew speed and accuracy
- Data volume and downlink
 - can't overfill solid-state recorders
 - high-gain antenna must be re-pointed towards ground station at least every 10,000s → stop observations
 - Deep Space Network antennas in California, Spain, and Australia
 - downlink contact 4h every 12h

Observatory Issues (3/3)

- Autonomous Operations
- Orbital constraints, target visibility
- Roll constraints
- Slew speed and accuracy
- Data volume and downlink
- Momentum management
 - radiation pressure on sunshield and trim flap
 - must be compensated by reaction wheels spin-up
 - eventually, reaction wheels must be slowed via thruster firing → orbit change
- Orbit maintenance
 - L2 is saddle point \rightarrow unstable orbit
 - increases risk of straylight and downlink problems
 - "station keeping" through periodic thruster firings
- Wavefront maintenance...

Event-driven Operations

- wait for each command to execute successfully before issuing next command
- if confirmation is not received, react in optimal way
- efficient, because failed activities can be skipped
- inefficient, because it implies strictly sequential operations \rightarrow large overheads

Operations Concept Document (OCD)

Target Acquisition and Slew Accuracy

Direction of Dispersion

Slit Throughput

Throughput varies strongly across the slit.

Acceptance Zone (a.k.a "Sweet Spot")

1.4 μm 2.4 μm 4.0 μm

(Conceptual) MSA Planning

MSA performance: Closed Shutters

shutters that do not open ("failed closed"):

- cannot be used, but do not cause further harm
- electrical shorts cause entire columns/rows to fail in closed state

MSA Performance: Open Shutters

shutters that do not close ("failed open"):

- are critical because they contaminate science spectra
- can mostly be plugged, turning them into "failed closed"

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Removing the Sky Background

Dithering Schemes

- corrects bad detector pixels
- improves sampling (spatial and spectral)
- allows background subtraction
- covers the detector gap

What about IFU and Fixed Slits?

- Conceptually much simpler
- still requires target acquisition, but may rely on "peak up" method if target is bright enough
- for bright targets in FS, use subarray mode

IFU Dithers and Mosaics

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Summary

goal for JWST operations is to minimize the amount of time "wasted" this means minimizing overheads and risk of "failed" observations there are many non-scientific constraints on JWST activity flow NIRSpec is particularly challenging to operate efficiently many aspects have been streamlined, but process is ongoing