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6-1-1996

ATLSS Strain Gage Conditioners: Operation, Specifications, and Use

Christopher C. Higgins

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Higgins, Christopher C., "ATLSS Strain Gage Conditioners: Operation, Specifications, and Use" (1996). ATLSS Reports. ATLSS report number 96-11:. [http://preserve.lehigh.edu/engr-civil-environmental-atlss-reports/218](http://preserve.lehigh.edu/engr-civil-environmental-atlss-reports/218?utm_source=preserve.lehigh.edu%2Fengr-civil-environmental-atlss-reports%2F218&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=PDFCoverPages)

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ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY FOR **LARGE** STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS

Lehigh University

ATLSS STRAIN GAGE CONDITIONERS:

OPERATION, COMPONENT SPECIFICATIONS, AND USE

by

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ATLSS Report No. 96-11

June 1996

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Table of Contents

Abstract

This manual describes the theory of operation, product specifications, and use of the strain gage conditioners (SGCs) developed for structural testing applications in the ATLSS Laboratories.

The SGC was developed for use with 120 Ω strain gages in a quarter bridge configuration with user selectable fixed gains of 1, 10, 100, 1000, and 2000. Bridge voltages can be varied from $+2.00$ V to $+5.00$ V. The bridge operates in null mode which permits balancing of the bridge for use of the full span of the data acquisition system $(\pm 10.00 \text{ V})$. Balancing the bridge is facilitated by two LEDs which indicate the bridge balance point. The circuit also includes an on-board passive low-pass filter with a cut-off frequency of 158 Hz. These specifications satisfy the typical strain gage requirements encountered in the ATLSS Laboratories.

1.0 Background

1.1 Theory of Operation

Strain gages are sensors which exhibit a change in electrical resistance when elongated or shortened. The resistance change is due primarily to a change in length of the very thin foil within the gage as well as transverse dilation of the foil. When the strain gage is shortened, the very thin foil within the gage shortens and the foil width increases resulting in a decrease of the gage resistance. Similarly, when the strain gage is elongated, the very thin foil within the gage lengthens and the foil width decreases resulting in a resistance increase. A strain gage bonded to a material which experiences a change in strain due to an applied load or temperature change, results in a resistance change in the gage. By calibrating the resistance change of the strain gage, the magnitude of the strain can be determined. The actual magnitude of resistance change is typically very small and difficult to directly measure with accuracy. Fortunately, there is a well known electrical circuit which permits more sensitive measurement of a resistance change for a component in the circuit network, called a Wheatstone bridge. As shown in Fig. 1, four resistors are necessary for the Wheatstone bridge. One or more arms of the bridge can be made-up of strain gages. When a single strain gage is used in the bridge, it is called a quarter bridge as shown in Fig. 2a. Two active strain gages make a half bridge (Fig. 2b), and four active gages make a full bridge (Fig. 2c).

Fig.1 - Typical Wheatstone Bridge.

 $\mathbf{2}$

The SGCs at ATLSS were developed for use only in a quarter bridge configuration. In addition to the single strain gage, three fixed value resistors, called bridge-completion resistors, are required to form the quarter-bridge network. The bridge also requires an external excitation voltage, E , called the driving voltage. When one arm of the bridge (the strain gage) changes resistance, a voltage change occurs between points b and d (Fig. 1) which is related to the change in the strain by the formula:

$$
\frac{E_o}{E} = \left[\frac{F \cdot \mu \varepsilon \times 10^{-6}}{4} \right]
$$
 [1]

Where $E_o(V)$ is the output voltage from the bridge between points b and d, $E(V)$ is the driving voltage, F is the gage factor, and $\mu \varepsilon$ is the measured microstrain. The voltage change, E_o , is something a data acquisition system can measure electronically. However, the actual magnitude of the voltage change is again quite small when considering the typical values used for the elements of the Wheatstone bridge used in the structures laboratory. To increase the resolution of the strain measurement, it is possible (and usually necessary) to gain or amplify the signal. Gaining the signal increases the magnitude of the original signal.

Fig. 2 - Examples of Wheatstone bridges with active arm strain gages.

1.2 System Overview

As discussed earlier, measurement of strain on a test specimen requires several components including a strain gage, an electrical circuit called a Wheatstone bridge which permits accurate measurement of the strain gage resistance change, a power supply to provide the driving voltage to the bridge, a circuit to gain the signal from the bridge, and a filtering circuit to reduce unwanted noise (discussed later). The SGC developed for ATLSS includes all of these features.

2.0 External Power Supply

Voltage to drive the bridge and power the electronics within the SGCs is provided by an external power supply illustrated in Fig. 3. The power supply is a regulated triple output linear supply with specifications shown in Appendix A. The three voltage outputs provide DC excitation of +12.0 V and -12.0 V for the ICs and the third output, +5.00 V, is used to drive the Wheatstone bridge and can be varied from $+2.00$ to $+5.00$ V by a trimpot on each SGC circuit board. Pin configurations for power connections between the power supply and SGC rack are shown in Fig. 4. The power supply is self contained, grounded, and capable of providing power to four racks of SGCs (32 individual cards). A cooling fan is recommended when powering multiple racks, especially for long duration tests, or in hot weather, as the supplies will become very warm. Fine adjustments can be made to the power supply output voltages by opening the supply enclosure and turning the adjustment potentiometers. This would be rarely necessary as absolute precision of the output voltages is not required by the SGC circuit. If the \pm 12.0 V supply is above \pm 11.0 V and the +5.00 V supply is above +4.50 V, the supplies do not require adjustment.

Fig. 3 - External power supply configuration.

Sockets located on power supplies and racks
Pins located on cables which connect the power supply Note: to the SGC rack.

Fig. 4 - Power connection between signal conditioning rack and power supply.

3.0 Strain Gage Conditioning Card (SGC)

3.1 Overview of Strain Gage Conditioning Card

The SGC card is the green circuit board with the necessary components for strain gage measurement. The circuit diagram is shown in Fig. 5. Eight SGC cards are housed in a rack-mountable enclosure and a single SGC card is required for each strain gage. Each of the SGC cards contains three precision (1% tolerance) resistors to complete the Wheatstone bridge, a fuse to prevent short circuiting the bridge, one IC for amplifying the signal, a passive single pole low-pass filter circuit, an IC for optical bridge balance, and two trimpots for bridge voltage and balancing adjustment.

Input and output wiring to the SGC is provided by screw terminals on the back of the card cage with the wiring configuration illustrated in Fig. 6. The SGC input requires a three wire hook-up for each strain gage (typical strain gage wiring) as illustrated in Fig. 7. Output to a data acquisition system is provided as a high (+ positive) and low (- negative) signal. The low signal for all cards is referenced to the power supply common, and thus the SGC can be used for single-ended data acquisition systems. Racks of SGC cards in cabinet enclosures have screw terminals wired to plugs for rapid connect/disconnect to test set-ups. Connector pin configurations are shown in Fig. 8.

Fig. 5 - Circuit diagram.

Fig. 6 - Screw terminal for input to and output from SGCs.

Fig. 7 - Wiring standard for strain gages.

Output from signal conditioning rack to data acquisition system.

Pin Configuration

Note standard wiring convention used to describe wire locations.

Input from strain gages to signal conditioning rack.

Fig. 8 - Connector configuration for input and output from rack-mounted SGCs.

3.2 Bridge Driving Voltage and Adjustment

The Wheatstone bridge on the SGC card is powered by the +5.00 V output from the triple output power supply. There is however, voltage loss along the wires which connect the power supply and SGC card. This results in voltage less than +5.00 V when measured at the card. To account for this reduction in supply voltage, a trimpot is provided on the SGC card to permit accurate adjustment of the bridge driving voltage as illustrated in Fig. 9. While it is not possible to increase the bridge voltage higher than $+5.00$ V, it is possible to adjust the bridge voltage downward to a suitable round number for simplified calculation of the circuit parameters. Typically, the bridge voltage is set to $+4.00$ V. This permits adequate signal to noise ratio while providing sufficient temperature dissipation for most 120 Ω strain gages (See strain gage manufacturers specifications for specific dissipation requirements). The bridge voltage can be adjusted as low as $+2.00$ V. Adjustment of the bridge voltage is made by turning the trimpot located at the face panel as shown in Fig. 10. The bridge voltage is measured with a standard digital multimeter (DMM) at the face panel as shown in Fig. 10.

Fig. 9 - Location of bridge voltage trimpot on SGC card.

Bridge Voltage Test Points

Fig. 10 - Location of bridge voltage trimpot on face panel.

3.3 Bridge Balancing

Output from the SGC card to the data acquisition system is not actually zero when the strain gage is unstrained. This is a result of the wire resistances which attach the strain gage to the SGC card, offset voltages from the ICs, imperfect matching of the bridge completion resistors, variation of the actual strain gage resistance, and other sources. The SGC permits the output to be zeroed so that when the strain gage is unstrained, the output to the data acquisition system is set to zero (or nulled). This is called null mode. When the bridge is properly nulled, there is approximately 0.00 V measured by the data acquisition system which permits the full range of the strain gage to be used. If the bridge is not nulled, the complete range $(\pm 10.00 \text{ V})$ of the data acquisition system will not be fully utilized. For example, if the unnulled output from the SGC to the data acquisition system is $+3.00$ V when there is no strain, then only $+7.00$ additional volts can be measured by the data acquisition system before going out of range or off scale. The system used only 70% of the available range capability. By nulling the output from the SGC, 100% range efficiency (or close to it) can be obtained from the data acquisition system.

Adjustment of the bridge balance is made by turning the trimpot located on the SGC card as shown in Fig. 11. The trimpot is accessed through the face panel and balancing is facilitated by two red LEDs also located on the face panel as shown in Fig. 12. The red LEDs are driven by a typical 741 operational amplifier (op amp) located on the SGC card as shown in Fig. 11. One LED will switch on while the other will switch off when the bridge is near the balance point. The trimpot should be turned in the opposite direction of the illuminated LED to reach the balance point. It is very difficult to get both LEDs to illuminate (perfect balance) as this is an inherently unstable condition. It is typically adequate to turn the trimpot just enough to have the LEDs change which one is illuminated. If the output must be balanced to absolute zero, a DMM can be used to measure the output from the SGC card as shown in Fig. 6 and the bridge balancing trimpot adjusted until 0.0 V is obtained on the meter.

Fig. 11 - Location of bridge balance trimpot on SGC card.

Fig. 12 - Location of bridge balance trimpot on face panel.

3.4 Bridge Output Gain

As mentioned earlier, it is often necessary to increase the magnitude of the signal from the Wheatstone bridge. This is necessary so that a data acquisition system can be used to measure a strain change accurately. Typical data acquisition systems are 12 bit systems which permit measurement of data at a resolution of ± 5 mV. This means that the system can only measure signal changes in increments of \pm 5 mV and cannot distinguish changes less than this value. A typical 2.0% maximum elongation, 120 Ω strain gage, using a driving voltage of 4.00 V, with a gage factor of 2.00, has a maximum bridge output voltage of only 0.04 V (Eq. 1). This value would permit only 8 data points to be collected by a 12 bit data acquisition system during the entire experiment. If the signal from the Wheatstone bridge is gained, the output voltage increases and results in greater resolution of strain for the data acquisition system. If in the previous example, a gain of 100 was used, the maximum output voltage to the data acquisition system would be 4.00 V and would permit acquisition of up to 800 data points. This results in a much better description of the strain behavior for the test specimen.

Gain for the SGC is provided by an IC called an instrumentation amplifier located on the circuit board as shown in Fig 13. An instrumentation amplifier is a precision component with desirable electrical operating characteristics and is especially suited for amplification The instrumentation amplifier selected for the SGC circuit, of low level signals. manufactured by Precision Monolithics Inc. (PMI), is in an eight pin epoxy package, possessing low input and output offset voltage, high common mode rejection ratio (CMR), gain accuracy of 0.5% at 1000 gain, low temperature coefficient, large band width at high gain, and fast slew rate. Gain is set by a single feedback resistor. Specifications for the instrumentation amplifier are contained in Appendix A. Pin connections for the PMI instrumentation amplifier are typical for eight pin packages and instrumentation amplifiers from other manufacturers may be substituted if necessary. Feedback resistors to the instrumentation amplifier are precision 1% tolerance components to provide actual gains very close to the nominally calculated gain.

Fig. 13 - Location of instrumentation amplifier on SGC card.

There are four preset gain settings selectable on the SGC card. The gain is set by depressing one of the DIP switches as illustrated in Fig. 14. The DIP switch is the component located between the two ICs as illustrated in Fig. 15. Table 1 contains the switch settings and corresponding gain, as well as typical data ranges and resolution for a 12 bit data acquisition system.

User Specified Gain

Fig. 15 - Location of DIP switch on SGC card.

			Max. Recordable	Strain Resolution for a
DIP Switch	Nominal Gain	$X_{\scriptscriptstyle Factor}$		Strain (@ \pm 10 V) [*] 12 bit Data Acquisition [*]
Position		$(\mu \varepsilon/V)$	$(\mu \varepsilon)$	$(\mu \varepsilon)$
None		479620.0	4796200.0	2398.10
	10	47962.0	479620.0	239.81
2	100	4796.2	47962.0	23.98
3	1000	479.6	4796.2	2.40
4	2000	239.8	2398.1	1.20
5	User Installed			

Note: Values were calculated for gage factor of 2.085, and driving voltage of 4.00 V.

Maximum recordable strain at 10.00 V for a typical 12 bit data acquisition system is calculated as follows:

$$
MaxStrain_{\pm 10V} = \left[\frac{4 \cdot 1000000}{F \cdot E \cdot Gain}\right] \cdot 10\tag{2}
$$

Where F is the gage factor, E is the driving voltage, and $Gain$ is the selected DIP switch gain value. Resolution of strain for a 12 bit data acquisition system is calculated as follows:

$$
\mu SR_{12\text{bit}} = \left[\frac{4 \cdot 1000}{F \cdot E \cdot Gain}\right] \cdot 5 \tag{3}
$$

To convert the output voltage from the SGC to engineering units such as microstrain (μ e), a conversion factor is required. Rearrangement of Eq. 1 including gain results in Eq. 4.

$$
X_{Factor} = \left[\frac{4 \cdot 1000000}{F \cdot E \cdot Gain} \right] \tag{4}
$$

 α .

Where $X_{Factor}(\mu \varepsilon/V)$ is the conversion factor from voltage to microstrain. In other words, the acquired voltage is multiplied by X_{Factor} to calculate μ . As an example, if the gage factor is 2.085, driving voltage is 3.00 V, and gain is 100, then 6,394.88 $\mu \varepsilon$ /V will be output from the signal conditioner to the data acquisition system.

3.5 Low-Pass Filter

Electrical noise is inherent in all electronic components and as a result, sensors used to measure structural response include noise in addition to the actual signal of interest. The noise encountered typically includes both random noise and noise associated with 60 Hz and harmonics of 60 Hz (a result of AC power lines). One of the best ways to limit AC noise pick-up is to use shielded cable and ground the shielding. Another way to minimize noise is to use data averaging. That is, take multiple samples and average them into one sample. This method is particularly useful in reducing random noise. Unfortunately, data averaging is typically not possible for higher frequency dynamic tests due to the high acquisition speeds required for these tests.

An electronic method used to reduce noise is the application of a filter. There are numerous types of filters and filter configurations. One of the simplest filters used to remove high frequency noise is a passive low-pass filter. Signals in a structures laboratory are typically signals very close to 0 Hz (DC signals). DC means there is no oscillating component or time varying component, typical for a static test, however this may not be the case for fatigue or dynamic tests. Noise has time varying components at frequencies above 0 Hz. Thus, to remove noise from the sensor signal, a filter should allow low frequency components (signal) to pass unchanged while removing higher frequency components riding on the signal (noise).

The passive filter on the SGC is a simple single pole resistor-capacitor (R-C) filter as shown in Fig. 16a (resistor is 1 k Ω and capacitor is 1.0 µF). A Bode plot of the filter response is shown in Fig. 17 and the frequency response is shown in Fig. 18.

Bode Plot of Low-Pass R-C Filter

Fig. 17 - Bode plot of frequency response.

Fig. 18 - Frequency response of low-pass filter.

The cut-off frequency (determined at 3dB) is 158 Hz. As a result, most of the amplitude for frequencies below 158 Hz are passed. To determine the amount of attenuation or amplitude loss at any particular frequency f (Hz), Eq. 5 can be used:

$$
\frac{V_{out}}{V_{in}} = \left[\frac{1}{\sqrt{4 \cdot C^2 \cdot R^2 \cdot \pi^2 \cdot f^2 + 1}} \right]
$$
 [5]

Where C (F) is the capacitance and R (Ω) is the resistance of the filter components. The filter response for the SGC is such that for experiments with frequencies above 10 Hz, there is little or no signal attenuation. This permits application of the SGC to fatigue tests operating in the lower frequency range. Though it is recommended the filter be used, it can be switched off if necessary by simply moving a single shunt to the position illustrated in Fig. 16b.

Fig. 16a - Position of shunt to switch filter on.

Fig. 16b - Position of shunt to switch filter off.

4.0 Use of Strain Gage Conditioning Card

4.1 Introduction

This section describes the typical application of the SGC and a step-by-step procedure to facilitate use of the conditioners.

4.2 Step-By-Step Procedure

- Bond and wire strain gages using the three wire hook-up as illustrated in Fig. 7. $4.2.1)$
- Check strain gage to ensure it is not grounded to the test specimen by measuring $4.2.2)$ the resistance between the gage and the specimen with a DMM (a resistance measured between the gage and the specimen indicates the gage is grounded to the specimen).
- Check gage resistance at the ends of the hook-up wire with a DMM before $(4.2.3)$ attaching wires to the SGC. Resistance between the white and black wires should be very small, and the resistance between the red and black wires and red and white wires should be approximately 120 Ω .
- Ensure gain setting is properly selected on each SGC. See previous section for $4.2.4)$ discussion of gain settings.
- Ensure filter is selected on each SGC. $4.2.5)$
- Wire the gage to the SGC as illustrated in Fig. 6. $4.2.6$
- Plug power supply in and turn power supply on. Green LED on power supply $4.2.7)$ will illuminate. One red balance LED will illuminate on each of the eight SGCs in the powered rack.
- Switch on power to the bridge for each gage. The switch is located on the front $4.2.8$ panel of the rack. A yellow LED will illuminate.
- Permit the conditioners to warm-up adequately (see cautionary notes). $(4.2.9)$
- 4.2.10) Measure the bridge voltage at the red and black test points with a DMM. Adjust the voltage as required (+4.00 V is typical) by turning the bridge voltage trimpot. When driving multiple racks of SGC with one power supply, this procedure should be performed multiple times to ensure proper voltage to all channels.

Start at one channel, adjust all bridge voltages and go back to the first channel and repeat. Repeat as many times as necessary until the voltages don't change. If a powered channel is turned off, the voltage on other channels may be affected This process sounds time and the balancing process should be repeated. consuming, but the system converges quickly to stable accurate bridge voltage levels.

- 4.2.11) Balance the bridge. The bridge balance trimpot should be turned in the opposite direction of the illuminated LED to reach the balance point. It is very difficult to get both LEDs to illuminate (perfect balance). It is typically adequate to turn the trimpot just enough to have the LEDs change which one is illuminated. If the output must be balanced to perfect zero, a DMM can be used to measure the output from the SGC card as shown in Fig. 6 and the bridge balancing trimpot adjusted until 0.00 V is obtained on the meter.
- 4.2.12) The system is ready for use.

4.3 Troubleshooting

4.3.1 Both red balance LEDs always on: This is a sure indication of a ground loop. Ground loops are always difficult to track down. Check to be sure no gages are grounded to the specimen and there are no crossed wires (high wired to low or vise versa) at the data acquisition system. Check the power supplies for all devices wired to the data acquisition system and ensure they are properly grounded and the reference commons are properly wired.

4.3.2 One red LED is always on even when the bridge voltage is off: This is normal operation of the SGC. When the external power supply is on and a rack of SGC is plugged in, the ICs on the card are automatically powered even when the bridge is not. It is one of these ICs that drives the balance LEDs.

 λ

4.3.3 The signal is noisy: Check to be sure there is a common reference connected to the data acquisition system. Insure the filter is selected. Follow the procedure in the previous section to turn filter on if necessary. Be sure to attach the shielding of the stain gage wires to ground. If use of the SGC filter is not desired, then consider filtering by external data averaging or other methods.

4.3.4 Yellow power LED does not come on when power is switched on

but one red LED is on: This is typically caused by a blown fuse on the SGC. Turn off the power to the bridge and disconnect the external power supply. Remove the existing fuse and replace with a new one. Be sure there are no bare wires shorting out the bridge at the end of the wires at the strain gage.

and no red LEDs are on: Ensure the power supply is plugged in and turned on. At least one red LED on each SGC should be illuminated when proper power is provided to the rack. Ensure there is proper power being provided by the power supply by measuring with a DMM (see pin designations discussed previously). If the supply short circuited, it can be reset by switching the power supply off and back on.

4.3.5 The gage appears grounded to the specimen when checked with a DMM: Unplug the power supply and re-check the gage. If the gage is still grounded, check the gage and repair as necessary. If the gage does not appear grounded then it is fine. The reason for the apparent grounding is that the power supply is tied to earth ground through the AC socket and the common is referenced to earth ground. Therefore, when a strain gage is hooked-up to the powered SGC there is a normal and measurable electrical path between earth ground and the strain gage. The gage should not be grounded to the specimen before being wired to the SGC and should be carefully checked before being connected to the conditioner.

4.3.6 Bridge will not balance: This is typical of a mistakenly wired gage or a bad strain gage. If there is an improper three wire hook-up or the gage resistance is very different

from specified (much different than 120 Ω) then the SGC will not balance. Check wiring and strain gage. Disconnect the stain gage wires from the SGC and ensure proper resistance of the gage by measuring with a DMM. Repair or replace the gage and check wiring configuration.

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5.0 Cautionary Notes

5.1 Sign convention of the output

The sign convention of the SGC output is positive for compressive strain and negative for tensile strain. To change the sign to the more conventional positive for tension, simply use a negative sign for the X_{Factor} used by the data acquisition program when converting voltage to engineering units of microstrain.

5.2 Gain Selection

Be sure to select the highest practical gain such that good resolution is achieved while the strain reading does not go out of range of the data acquisition. See Table 1 for examples of gain ranges and limitations.

5.3 Temperature sensitivity

All electrical components are sensitive to temperature changes. The operating characteristics of most electrical components change with temperature. To ensure proper performance and eliminate output voltage drift due to temperature changes, warm-up the SGC and strain gages a *minimum* of one hour and preferably overnight. This time permits all components to reach an equilibrium temperature. Better performance is achieved when sufficient time is permitted for warm-up, and the SGC can operate continuously for many days/weeks without damage.

5.4 Temperature Compensation

Typical gages are temperature compensating over normal operating temperatures. The SGC does not provide internal temperature compensating gages as part of the circuit. Therefore, if extreme operating temperatures are used for an experiment, a separate strain gage should be bonded to an unstressed piece of material which is at the same temperature as the stressed test specimen. The temperature effect can be removed during post-processing of the data by removing the thermal strain measured on the unstressed material. See individual strain gage manufacturer literature for information regarding

specific gage temperature compensation performance and to determine if an external temperature gage is necessary.

5.5 Shunt Calibration

While the actual gain of the SGC card is very close to the nominal gain value, shunt calibration of each SGC card is suggested to obtain the most accurate measurement of strain on the laboratory floor. A shunt calibration device is available to verify the gain accuracy of the SGCs. Each card should be calibrated for the specific gain value to be used in the actual experiment. A written step-by-step procedure, developed by Perry S. Green, is provided in Appendix B to illustrate the process required for shunt calibration of the SGC cards. Gain linearity for the instrumentation amplifier is not assured for gains over 1000, therefore gain accuracy should always be calibrated for very high gains.

6.0 Advanced Options of Strain Gage Conditioning Cards

6.1 User Installed Filtering

The on-board passive low-pass filter can be modified to provide a frequency response different than the default filter. Installation of a capacitor into position C_2 and movement of the capacitor selection shunt as illustrated in Figs. 19a and 19b is required to change the filter. The capacitor value should be selected according to Eq. 6.

$$
C = \sqrt{\frac{1}{4} \cdot \frac{1}{1000^2 \cdot \pi^2 \cdot f_{\text{cut}}^2}}
$$
 [6]

Where f_{cut} (Hz) is the desired cut-off frequency (3dB attenuation at f_{cut}), and C (F) is the necessary capacitor value. High quality, tight tolerance (5% or better), nonpolarized 50WV capacitors such as Panasonic V-Series stacked metalized film capacitors would be required.

Fig. 19a - Position of shunt to select capacitor 1 for filter.

Fig. 19b - Position of shunt to select capacitor 2 for filter.

6.2 User Installed Gains

Amplification of the bridge output can be modified to provide a gain value different than the default values. Installation of a new resistor into position R_5 and selection of position 5 on the DIP switch as illustrated in Fig. 20 is all that is required to provide a unique user gain value. The resistor value should be determined according to Eq. 7.

$$
R_{Gain_5} = \sqrt{\frac{50000\Omega}{Gain - 1}}
$$
 [7]

Where *Gain* is the required gain, and $R_{Gain_5}(\Omega)$ is the necessary resistor value. High quality, tight tolerance (1% or better), 1/4 Watt resistors are required for accurate gains.

Fig. 20 - Location of additional resistor required for user installed gain.

6.3 Variable Gain

It is possible to change the SGC from fixed gain to variable gain. Installation of two trimpots, a jumper wire into position 5, and selection of position 5 on the DIP switch are required as illustrated in Fig. 21. Additionally, on the back of the SGC card, one small copper trace must be removed as shown in Fig. 22. This option is one which should be carefully considered before installing. When variable gain is used, shunt calibration (a time consuming procedure) is required before each use of the SGC card.

The trimpots for the variable gain should be 3/4 in. rectangular, cermet, multi-turn (10 or more) sealed trimming potentiometers (Bourns Model 3006 or equivalent). One trimpot should provide coarse gain adjustment (larger resistance value) and the other should provide fine gain adjustment (smaller resistance value). Modification of the face panel is also required as illustrated in Fig. 23.

Fig. 21 - Location of additional trimpots and jumper required for variable gain.

Fig. 22 - Copper trace which must be removed to install variable gain.

Typical additional holes required in face panel

Fig. 23 - Location of additional holes required in face panel for variable gain option.

6.4 Internal Shunt Calibration

Single point internal shunt calibration is possible with the SGC. A strain gage, precision resistor, and two switches are required. This is a very difficult option to install, as additional holes must be drilled in the face panel to permit installation of the switches. See Fig. 24 for the salient features of this option. If variable gain modifications are made to the SGC cards, internal shunt calibration would be a logical option to permit accurate determination of the actual circuit gain set by the variable gain trimpots

Existing screw terminal Located on the back plane of rack

SGC card

Fig. 24 - Salient features of internal shunt calibration option.

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 $\hat{\mathcal{A}}$

 \bar{z}

 $\omega \rightarrow \pi$

APPENDIX A

 $\label{eq:2.1} \begin{split} \mathcal{L}_{\text{max}}(\mathbf{r}) & = \mathcal{L}_{\text{max}}(\mathbf{r}) \mathcal{L}_{\text{max}}(\mathbf{r}) \,, \end{split}$

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Component Specifications

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Specified SGC Component Values

Complete Parts List

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 $\frac{1}{1}$ 5(450")

Input AC Connections:

 ~ 14 $\mathcal{L}_{\mathbf{a}}$

Mechanical Dimensions: mm (Inches)

DC OUTPUT

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 $9.5(37)$

roe.s.a.ca

 $9(75)$

P/N 36169-05
Rev 4/88

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A.1 Triple output power supply.

Translent Response Time:

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INPUT SPECIFICATIONS:

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47-63 Hz (Typical is 60 Hz.
derate.output 10% at 50 Hz.)

Frequency Range:

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50 μ SEC at 50% load changes for outputs
rated up to 6 A
100 μ SEC at 50% load changes for outputs
rated 6 A and over Units are not hased internally, For safe operation, user must provide input line hase as per values given in table. **UTPUT SPECIFICATIONS:** se Requirements:

A.1 Triple output power supply.

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Precision Monolithics Inc.

- · Gain Equation Accuracy ..
- · Single Resistor Gain Set
- · Input Overvoltage Protection
- · Low Cost
- * Available in Die Form

APPLICATIONS

- · Differential Amplifier
- · Strain Gauge Amplifier
- · Thermocouple Amplifier
- · RTD Amplifier
- · Programmable Gain Instrumentation Amplifier
- · Medical Instrumentation
- · Data Acquisition Systems

ORDERING INFORMATION 1

Burn-in is available on commercial and industrial temperature range parts in Ŧ CerDIP, plastic DIP, and TO-can packages. For ordering information, see PMTs Data Book, Section 2.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

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The AMP-02 is the first precision instrumentation amplifier available in an 8-pin package. Gain of the AMP-02 is set by a single external resistor, and can range from 1 to 10,000. No gain set resistor is required for unity gain. The AMP-02 includes an input protection network that allows the inputs to be taken 60V beyond either supply rail without damaging the device.

Laser trimming reduces the input offset voltage to under 100µV. Output offset voltage is below 4mV and gain accuracy is better than 0.5% for gain of 1000. PMI's proprietary thin-film resistor process keeps the gain temperature coefficient under 50 pom/°C.

Due to the AMP-02's design, its bandwidth remains very high over a wide range of gain. Slew rate is over 4V/us making the AMP-02 ideal for fast data acquisition systems.

A reference pin is provided to allow the output to be referenced to an external DC level. This pin may be used for offset correction or level shifting as required. In the 8-pin package, sense is internally connected to the output.

For an instrumentation amplifier with the highest precision, consult the AMP-01 data sheet. For the highest input impedance and speed, consult the AMP-05 data sheet.

BASIC CIRCUIT CONNECTIONS

8/89, Rev. C

\overline{PMI}

AMP-02 HIGH ACCURACY 8-PIN INSTRUMENTATION AMPLIFIER

16-Pin SOL (S)

NOTE:

1. Absolute maximum ratings apply to both DICE and packaged parts, unless

1. Absolute maximum ratings apply to both DICE and package parts, unless

2. Θ_{iA} is specified for worst case mounting

ELECTRICAL CHARACTERISTICS at $V_S = \pm 15V$, $V_{CM} = 0V$, $T_A = +25^{\circ}C$, unless otherwise noted.

8/89, Rev. C

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AMP-02 HIGH ACCURACY 8-PIN INSTRUMENTATION AMPLIFIER

AL CHARACTERISTICS at $\rm V_s$ = ±15V, $\rm V_{\rm CM}$ = 0V, $\rm T_A$ = +25°C, unless otherwise noted. Continued

NOTES:

 EMD

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NOTES:
1. Guaranteed by design.
2. Gain tempor does not include the effects of external component drift.
3. Input voltage range guaranteed by common-mode rejection test.

 $\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 &$

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8/89, Rev. C

AMP-02 HIGH ACCURACY 8-PIN INSTRUMENTATION AMPLIFIER $\overline{\text{PMI}}$ **DICE CHARACTERISTICS** \bigodot 1. HG_1

2. $-HN$

3. $+HN$

4. $V-$

5. REFERENCE Ŧ 6. OUT
7. V_{+} $\overline{}$ $\overline{\$ Connect Substrate to V-For additional DICE ordering information, refer to PMI's Data Book, Section 2. DIE SIZE 0.103 x 0.116 inch, 11,948 sq. mils (2.62 x 2.95 mm, 7.73 sq. mm)

WAFER TEST LIMITS at $V_s = \pm 15V$, $V_{CM} = 0V$, $T_A = +25^{\circ}C$, unless otherwise noted.

noce:
Electrical tests are performed at wafer probe to the limits shown. Due to variations in assembly methods and normal yield loss, yield after packaging is not guaranteed for
standard product dice. Consult factory to ne

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TEMPER

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AMP-02 HIGH ACCURACY 8-PIN INSTRUMENTATION AMPLIFIER

APPLICATIONS INFORMATION

INPUT AND OUTPUT OFFSET VOLTAGES

Instrumentation amplifiers have independent offset voltages associated with the input and output stages. The input offset component is directly multiplied by the amplifier gain, whereas output offset is independent of gain. Therefore, at low gain, output-offset-errors dominate, while at high gain, input-offseterrors dominate. Overall offset voltage, V_{OS}, referred to the output (RTO) is calculated as follows:

V_{OS} (RTO) = $(V_{10S} \times G) + V_{OOS}$

where V_{1QS} and V_{0OS} are the input and output offset voltage specifications and G is the amplifier gain.

The overall offset voltage drift TCV_{OS} , referred to the output, is a combination of input and output drift specifications. Input offset voltage drift is multiplied by the amplifier gain, G, and summed with the output offset drift:

 TCV_{OS} (RTO) = (TCV_{IOS} x G) + TCV_{OOS}

where TCV_{IOS} is the input offset voltage drift, and TCV_{OOS} is the output offset voltage drift. Frequently, the amplifier drift is referred back to the input (RTI) which is then equivalent to an input signal change:

TCV_{OS} (RTI) = TCV_{OS} + $\frac{TCV_{OOS}}{G}$

For example, the maximum input-referred drift of an AMP-02EP set to $G = 1000$ becomes:

 TCV_{OS} (RTI) = 2µV/°C + $\frac{100 \mu V$ /°C = 2.1µV/°C 1000

INPUT BIAS AND OFFSET CURRENTS

Input transistor bias currents are additional error sources which can degrade the input signal. Bias currents flowing through the signal source resistance appear as an additional offset voltage. Equal source resistance on both inputs of an IA will minimize offset changes due to bias current variations with signal voltage and temperature. However, the difference between the two bias currents, the input offset current, produces an error. The magnitude of the error is the offset current times the source resistance.

A current path must always be provided between the differential inouts and analog ground to ensure correct amplifier operation. Floating inputs, such as thermocouples, should be grounded close to the signal source for best common-mode rejection.

GAIN

The AMP-02 only requires a single external resistor to set the voltage gain. The voltage gain, G, is:

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G = \frac{50k\Omega}{R_0} + 1
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and $50\text{h}\Omega$

 R_G = $G - 1$ The voltage gain can range from 1 to 10,000. A gain set resistor is not required for unity-gain applications. Metal-film or wirewound resistors are recommended for best results.

The total gain accuracy of the AMP-02 is determined by the tolerance of the external gain set resistor, R_G, combined with the
gain equation accuracy of the AMP-02. Total gain drift combines the mismatch of the external gain set resistor drift with that of the internal resistors (20ppm/°C typ). Maximum gain drift of the AMP-02 independent of the external gain set resistor is 50 ppm/°C.

All instrumentation amplifiers require attention to layout so thermocouple effects are minimized. Thermocouples formed between copper and dissimilar metals can easily destroy the TCV_{OS} performance of the AMP-02 which is typically 0.5µV/°C. Resistors themselves can generate thermoelectric EMFs when mounted parallel to a thermal gradient.

The AMP-02 uses the triple op amp instrumentation amplifier configuration with the input stage consisting of two transimpedance amplifiers followed by a unity-gain differential amplifier. The input stage and output buffer are laser-trimmed to increase gain accuracy. The AMP-02 maintains wide bandwidth at all gains as shown in Figure 1. For voltage gains greater than 10, the bandwidth is over 200kHz. At unity-gain, the bandwidth of the AMP-02 exceeds 1MHz.

FIGURE 1: The AMP-02 keeps its bandwidth at high gains.

COMMON-MODE REJECTION

Ideally, an instrumentation amplifier responds only to the difference between the two input signals and rejects common-mode voltages and noise. In practice, there is a small change in output voltage when both inputs experience the same common-mode voltage change; the ratio of these voltages is called the common-mode gain. Common-mode rejection (CMR) is the logarithm of the ratio of differential-mode gain to common-mode gain, expressed in dB. Laser trimming is used to achieve the high CMR of the AMP-02.

8/89, Rev. C

FIGURE 2: Triple Op Amp Topology of the AMP-02

Figure 2 shows the triple op amp configuration of the AMP-02. With all instrumentation amplifiers of this type, it is critical not to exceed the dynamic range of the input amplifiers. The amplified differential input signal and the input common-mode voltage must not force the amplifier's output voltage beyond ±12V (V_S = ±15V) or nonlinear operation will result.

The input stage amplifier's output voltages at V₁ and V₂ equals:

$$
V_1 = -\left(1 + \frac{2R}{R_G}\right) \frac{V_D}{2} + V_{CM}
$$

$$
= -G\frac{V_D}{2} + V_{CM}
$$

$$
V_2 = \left(1 + \frac{2R}{R_G}\right) \frac{V_D}{2} + V_{CM}
$$

$$
\bullet \quad G\frac{V_{D}}{R} + V_{CM}
$$

where

Differential input voltage v_o

$$
= (+1N) - (-1N)
$$

$$
V_{CM} = \text{Common-mode input voltage}
$$

- Gain of instrumentation amplifier Ġ

If V_1 and V_2 can equal $\pm 12V$ maximum, then the common-mode input voltage range is:

$$
CMVR = \pm \left(12V - \frac{GV_0}{2}\right)
$$

GROUNDING

The majority of instruments and data acquisition systems have $\overline{}$ separate grounds for analog and digital signals. Analog ground may also be divided into two or more grounds which will be tied together at one point, usually the analog power-supply ground. In addition, the digital and analog grounds may be joined, normaily at the analog ground pin on the A to D converter. Following this basic practice is essential for good circuit performance.

Mixing grounds causes interactions between digital circuits and the analog signals. Since the ground returns have finite resistance and inductance, hundreds of millivolts can be developed between the system ground and the data acquisition components. Using separate ground returns minimizes the current flow in the sensitive analog return path to the system ground point. Consequently, noisy ground currents from logic gates do not interact with the analog signals.

Inevitably, two or more circuits will be joined together with their grounds at differential potentials. In these situations, the differential input of an instrumentation amplifier, with its high CMR, can accurately transfer analog information from one circuit to another.

SENSE AND REFERENCE TERMINALS

The sense terminal completes the feedback path for the instrumentation amplifier output stage and is internally connected directly to the output. For SOL devices, connect the sense terminal to the output. The output signal is specified with respect to the reference terminal, which is normally connected to analog ground. The reference may also be used for offset correction or level shifting. A reference source resistance will reduce the common-mode rejection by the ratio of $25k\Omega/R_{\text{REF}}$. If the reference source resistance is 1Ω , then the CMR will be reduced to 88dB (25k Ω /1 Ω = 88dB).

AMP-02 HIGH ACCURACY 8-PIN INSTRUMENTATION AMPLIFIER

PMI

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OVERVOLTAGE PROTECTION

Instrumentation amplifiers invariably sit at the front end of instrumentation systems where there is a high probability of exposure to overloads. Voltage transients, failure of a transducer, or removal of the amplifier power supply while the signal source is connected may destroy or degrade the performance of an unprotected device. A common technique used is to place limiting processes series of sommer resources assets to place mining 02 includes internal protection circuitry that limits the input current to ±4mA for a 60V differential overload (see Figure 3) with power off, ±2.5mA with power on.

FIGURE 3: AMP-02's input protection circuitry limits input current during overvoltage conditions.

POWER SUPPLY CONSIDERATIONS

Achieving the rated performance of precision amplifiers in a practical circuit requires careful attention to external influences. For example, supply noise and changes in the nominal voltage directly affect the input offset voltage. A PSR of 80dB means that
a change of 100mV on the supply, not an uncommon value, will produce a 10µV input offset change. Consequently, care should be taken in choosing a power unit that has a low output noise level, good line and load regulation, and good temperature stability, in addition, each power supply should be properly bypassed.

8/89, Rev. C

A.3 Connectors to and from SGC racks.

A.3 Connectors to and from SGC racks.

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A.3 Connectors to and from SGC racks.

A.4 Connectors for header pins on SGC card.

MTA-100 and MTA-156 Connectors and Headers; CST-100 and SL-156 Connectors

Catalog 82056 Revised 4-94

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MTA-100 IDC Connectors - Closed End and Feed-Thru

 $\leq t \leq C$ losed End Connectors **Material and Finish** Housing -UL94V-2 rated. type 6/6
and 6/12 rivion, see below for color: or
UL94V-0 'ated, nyion, black Contacts -- Phosphor bronze, post line
placed or 000030 [0.00076] post goldplated over nickel

Note: Connectors with contacts
.000015 '0.00038] post gold plated
over nickel, available upon request
Minimums may apply.

UL94V-2 Color Coding by **Wire Size** 28 AWG - Green
26 AWG - Blue
24 AWG - Natural
22 AWG - Red

UL94V-0 - Black \mathcal{L}

For mating half, see pages
10 thru 14.

Without Polarizing Tabs

With Polarizing Tabs

Feed-Thru Connectors

Without PolarizingTabs

With Polarizing Tabs

For crawings, technola, detailer samb es critica your AMP soles engineer or call the AMP Product Information Center 1-800-522-6752
Dimensions alevin rothe, and millimatists uness threndle spacified. Vascel in brackets are

A.4 Connectors for header pins on SGC card.

MTA-100 and MTA-156 Connectors and Headers: CST-100 and SL-156 Connectors

Catalog 82056 Revised 4-94

THE-SUB-100
001-ATM

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MTA-100 IDC Connectors - Closed End and Feed-Thru (Continued)

Connector Ordering Information

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The "Base Part Numbers" Chart at right shows the base part number and numper of circuits available for the described connectors.

Prefixes and suffixes are determined by the number of circuit positions in the connector For example the 10-position closed end connector without polarizing tabs for 22 AWG wire would $ne:$

Base number 640440 plus prefix-and-suffix

 $1 - -0$

The correct craering numder is

1-640440-0

Notes:

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- Notes:
1. Connector circuits can be molded
the merums may apply
- or increases with contacts .000015

2. Connectors with contacts .000015

profession profession increases.

M. Annums may apply

A. Contact at the contact of the c
- 3. Cortact AMP Incorporated for
available circuit sizes.
- 4. Other circuit sizes are available upon request. Minimums may
apply

BL94V-2 Color Coding by Wire Size 28 AWG - Green
26 AWG - Bale
24 AWG - Nature.
22 AWG - Red

UL94V-B-3 ack

For mating half, see pages 10 thru 14

J.

For drawings interacal docalor samples, contact your AMP sales experience hall the AMP Product Information Center 1-800-522-6752.
O mersions are in increasing matter primes underworkspecified. Malus in crosses are morre eq

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A.5 SGC rack.

A.6 SGC card trimpot.

3/4" RECTANGULAR / MULTITURN CERMET / INDUSTRIAL / SEALED

- Low PC board profile only 1/4" high
- Panel mount option available (see page 67 for details)
- Transparent housing available, setting visually without
- hook-up and instrumentation ("P" style only)

Model 3006

Trimpot³ Trimming Potentiometer

Electrical Characteristics (whichever is greater) **Environmental Characteristics** Temperature Range ------------------------------------55°C to +125°C
Temperature Coefficient PRINTING 2012 MEL-31U-202 Method 103

(3% ΔTR, 20 Megohms IR)

Vibration20G (2% ΔTR; 2% ΔVR)

Shock............50G (2% ΔTR; 2% ΔVR)

Shock.............50G (2% ΔTR; 2% ΔVR) Load Life ..1,000 hours 0.75 watt 70°C Jet Tours Stroman (4% ATR)
If (3% ATR; 1% or 1 ohm.
whichever is greater, CRV) Rotational Life...

Physical Characteristics

and style

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77.77 \times 10^{-2}
$$

Popular values listed in boldface. Special
resistances available.

HOW TO ORDER 3006 P - 1 - 103 Z Model Style Standard or Modified Product Indicator

-1 = Standard Product
-1 = Standard Product
-7 = Transparent Housing Resistance Code Optional Suffix Letter

Z = Panel Mount

(Factory Installed)

Consult factory for other available options.

Specifications are subject to change without notice. "Fluorinert" is a registered trademary of 314 Co.

A.8 Power supply enclosure.

A.9 SGC card 1% resistors.

APPENDIX B

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Shunt Calibration Procedure

LCHP-08 STRAIN GAGE CONDITIONER CARD CALIBRATION INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Plug the Signal Conditioner Rack into Power Supply
- 2. Plug the Power Supply into 120V 20A outlet.
- 3. Turn the Signal Conditioner Power switches to the ON position (to the right). The Yellow Power Light will illuminate.
- 4. Set the Gain position on each card to the desired gain setting for calibration. Record the Gain position on the Data Sheet.

- 5. Let the Signal Conditioner Rack "warm up" for at least 30 minutes; one hour is preferable.
- 6. Record the Rack Number and Signal Conditioner Card Numbers on the Data Sheet.

- 7. Starting with Card 1 and continuing through Card 8 on each Signal Conditioner Rack, perform the following:
	- A. Attach the leads from the Fluke 45 Dual Display Multimeter to the output terminals of the Signal Conditioner Card. The multimeter should be set on DC Voltage ($V^{\frac{1}{2}}$).
	- B. Attach the 3-wire input from the Shunt Calibration Box to the input terminals of the Signal Conditioner Card.
	- C. Attach the leads from the Fluke 70 Series II Multimeter to the Test Points on the Signal Conditioner Card. (Red to Red, Black to Black). The multimeter should be set on DC Voltage ($V = 1$).
	- D. Put the Swithch on the Shunt Calibration Box in Position 0.
	- E. Set the BRIDGE VOLTAGE to 4.00 VDC by adjusting the Turn Pot with a Bourns pot turning device. Read the value on the Fluke 70 multimeter and record it on the Data Sheet.
	- F. Balance the quarter bridge by adjusting the BRIDGE BALANCE Turn Pot with a Bourns pot turning device until the display on the Fluke 45 multimeter reads less than +/- 1.00 mVDC. To balance the bridge, turn the pot in the opposite direction from the illuminated Red Balance Light.
	- G. Record on the Data Sheet, the Shunt Calibration Box data for the following Switch positions 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 0
- 8. Detach leads and 3-wire input from Card 8, switch the display on the Fluke 45 multimeter to Resistance (Ω), connect the clips to the WH and BL wires and record the value on the Data Sheet. Now connect the clips to the RD and BL wires and record the values for Switch positions $0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5$ on the Data Sheet.

Rev. 0 March 9, 1995

LCHP-08 STRAIN GAGE CONDITIONER CALIBRATION DATA SHEET

