Molecular weight and chain architecture dependence of glassy compliance of ultrathin freely standing polymer films SHANHONG XU, GREGORY B. MCKENNA1, Texas Tech University — Glassy compliance of ultrathin linear polystyrene films of different molecular weights was investigated with the novel nanobubble inflation techniques developed in our lab. Previous work by O’Connell, Hutcheson and McKenna [1] indicates that the glassy compliance decreases as the film thickness decreases for a polystyrene sample with molecular weight of 1M g/mol. However the glassy stiffening is not nearly as dramatic as that observed in the rubbery plateau regime [2]. Preliminary results in the present work show that the glassy compliance decreases as the molecular weight increases. We are now examining a three-arm star polystyrene with branch molecular weight the same as that of the lower molecular weight linear material and eight-arm stars will also be investigated with the purpose of determining chain architecture effects on the glassy and rubbery behaviors of ultrathin polymer films.


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Date submitted: 30 Nov 2008

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