Influence of surface and interface properties on the electrical conductivity of silicon nanomembranes

X-F. ZHAO, S. SCOTT, M. HUANG, W. PENG, D. SAVAGE, M. ERIKSSON, M. LAGALLY — We investigate the electronic transport properties of silicon nanomembranes (SiNMs) on oxide by the van der Pauw method. SiNMs, thin sheets of single-crystal Si, feature an extreme sensitivity of electronic transport properties to surface and interface condition, because of the large surface-to-volume ratio. Removing the top oxide with HF reduces the sheet resistance four orders of magnitude for the thinnest NMs (∼20nm) [1], a value much greater than can be accounted for by simply reducing interface traps. We compare SiNMs prepared with HF to H terminations prepared via CVD, to identify which factors control this change in conductivity. We also perform a forming gas (5% H₂ in N₂) anneal on oxidized NMs. The sheet resistance drops relative to unannealed NMs, demonstrating the influence of states at Si/SiO₂ interfaces. A qualitative model that includes these several factors influencing the sheet resistance is described.


Supported by CSC, DOE, NSF/MRSEC, and AFOSR.

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Date submitted: 24 Nov 2009

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