

Ferroelectric Field-effect Transistors: Operation, Reliability, and Logic Compatibility



Asif Khan

School of Electrical and Computer Engineering

School of Materials Science and Engineering

Georgia Institute of Technology

akhan40@gatech.edu

IEEE Semiconductor Interface Specialist Conference (SISC)

12/10/2022

Ferroelectric Field-effect Transistors: Operation, Reliability, and Logic Compatibility

**Georgia
Tech**
CREATING THE NEXT

Nujhat Tasneem



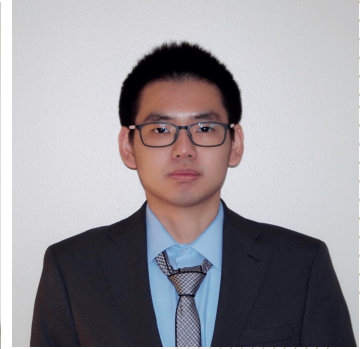
Dipjyoti Das



Chinsung Park



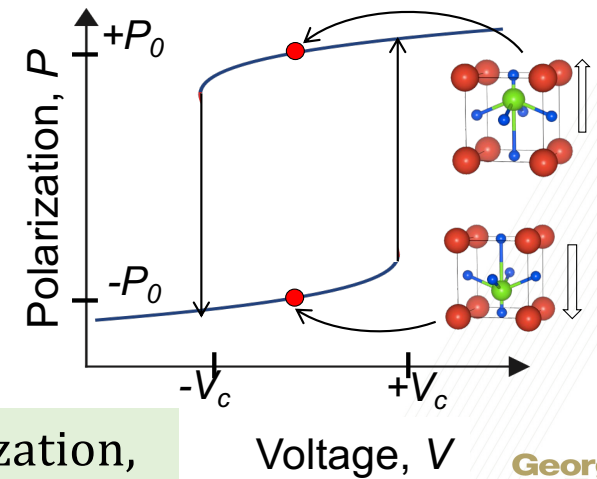
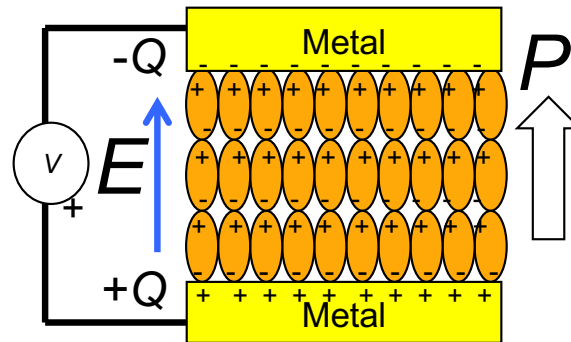
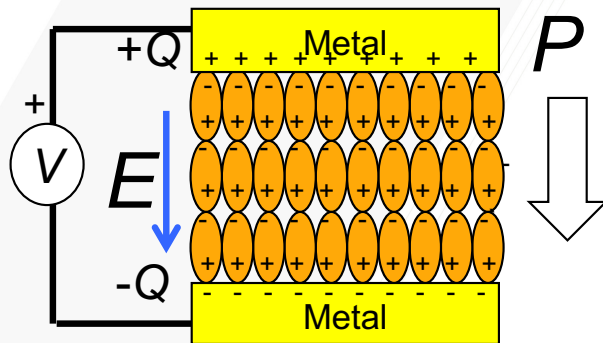
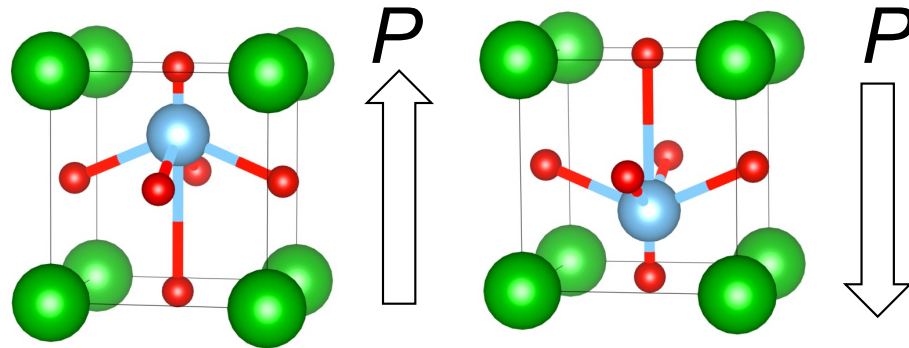
Zheng Wang



Ferroelectricity

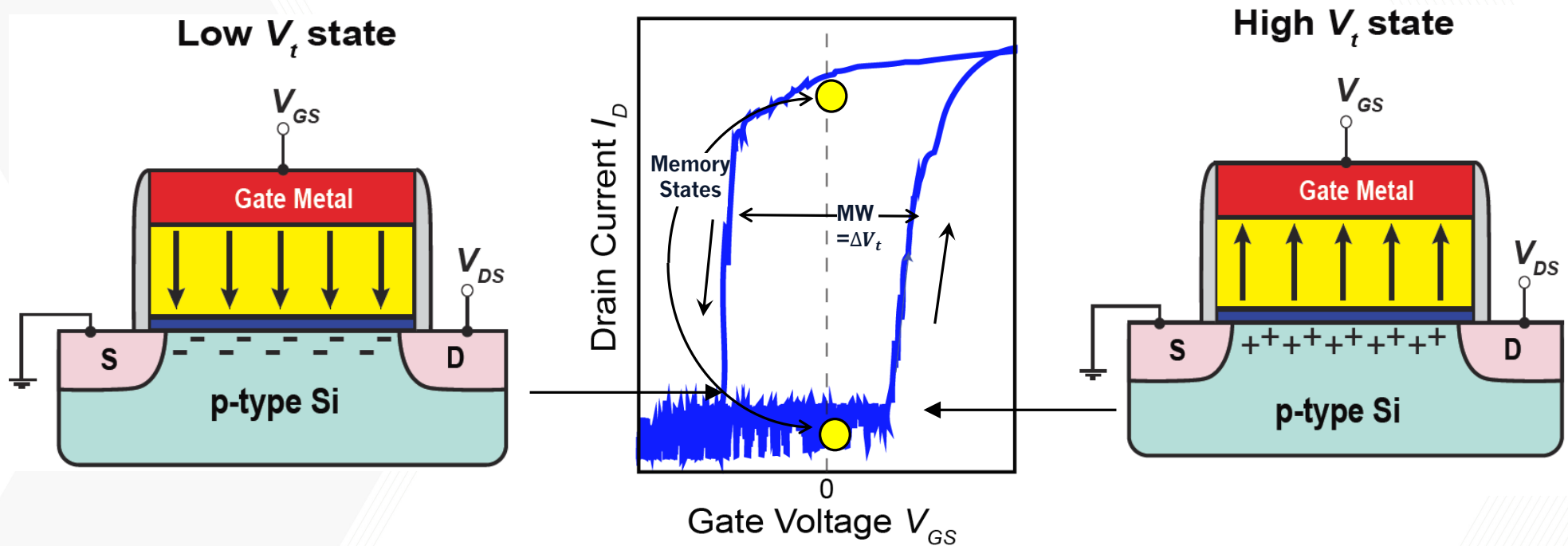
Classical Ferroelectric
 PbTiO_3 , BaTiO_3 etc.

Emerging CMOS compatible
Ferroelectrics:
Doped HfO_2



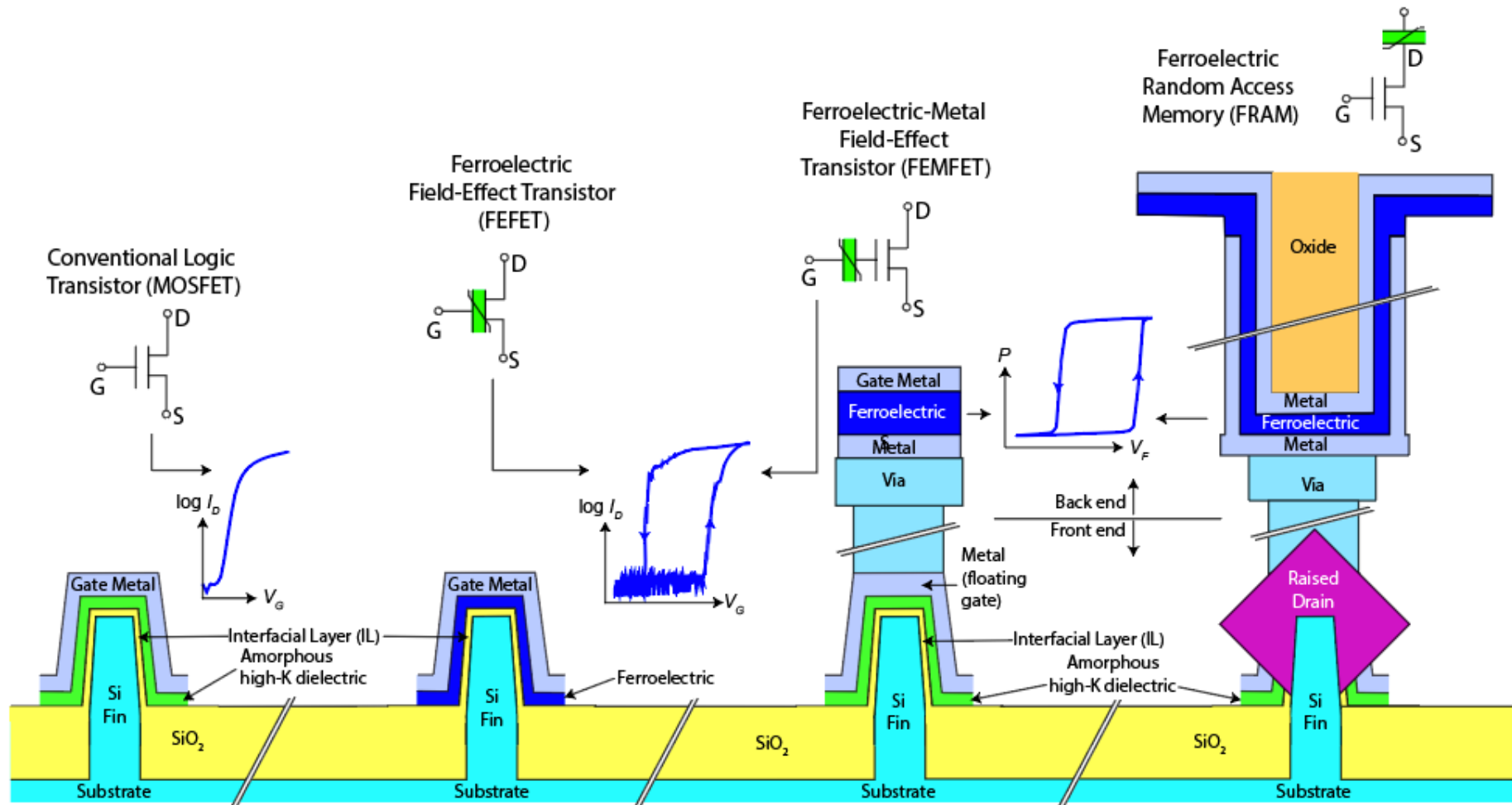
A ferroelectric is an insulator with a spontaneous polarization, which can be switched by an above coercive voltage .

Ferroelectric field-effect transistors (FEFETs)

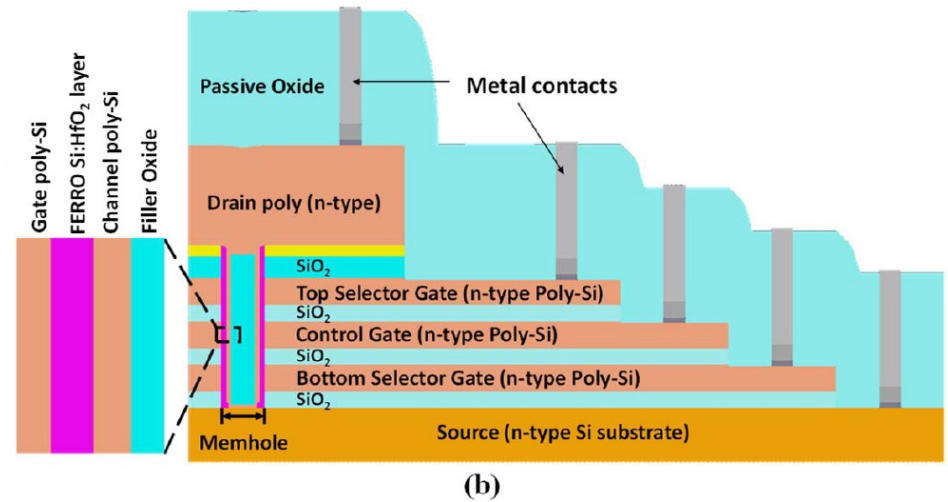
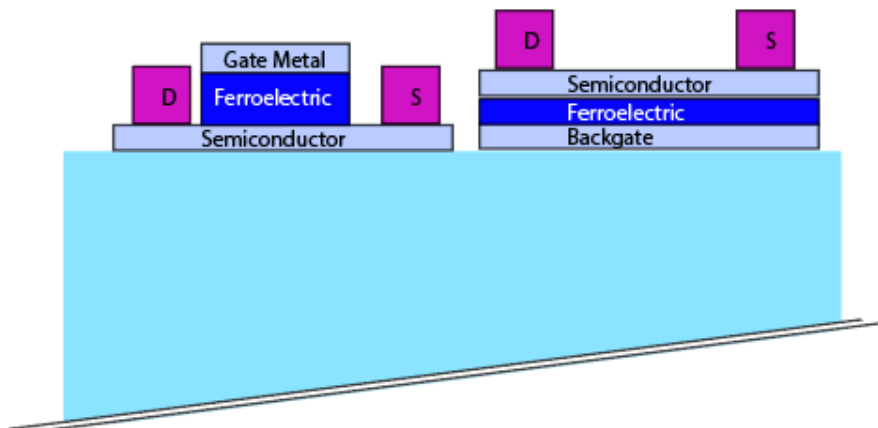


FEFET is a FET with the threshold voltage shifted by the remnant polarization.

Ferroelectric devices (1 of 2)



Khan, Keshavarzi, Datta, "The future of ferroelectric field-effect transistor technology", Nature Electronics 2020



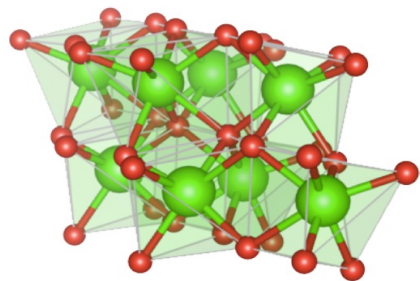
FEFET as an embedded memory

Metrics	Mainstream embedded memory					Embedded ferroelectric memory			
	eSRAM	eDRAM ⁷⁰	eFlash (FG)	eFlash (SG MONOS) ⁴²	eFlash (SONOS) ⁴¹	FEFET (hafnia based, MFIS structure)	FEFET (hafnia based, MFMIS structure)	FRAM (hafnia based)	FRAM (perovskite based) ⁶⁷
Cell size	120-150F ²	40F ²	40-60F ²	40-50F ²	50-60F ²	10-30F ²	10-30F ²	30-40F ²	50-60F ²
Cell structure	6T	1T1C	1.5T	1.5T	2T	1T	1T1FE, 1T	1T1FE, 2T2FE	1T1FE, 2T2FE
Non-volatile	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Multi-bit operation	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Non-destructive read	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Status	Av.	Dev.	Av.	Dev.	Dev.	Res.	Res.	Res.	Av.
Advanced node demonstration	7 nm FinFET	22 nm FinFET	40 nm	16 nm FinFET	28 nm HKMG	22 nm FDSOI	N/A	N/A	130 nm
Write voltage	<1 V	<1 V	~12 V	~12 V	~5 V	1.5-4 V	~1.5 V	1-3 V	1.5 V
Write energy	~1 fJ	~1 pJ	~100 pJ	~100 pJ	1-10 pJ	1-10 fJ	1-10 fJ	~100 fJ	~1 pJ
Standby power	High	Medium	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
Write speed	<1 ns	>10 ns	~100 ns	<100 ns	~100 ns	1-10 ns	1-10 ns	1-10 ns	1 μs
Read speed	<1 ns	>10 ns	~10 ns	<10 ns	~10 ns	1-10 ns	1-10 ns	1-25 ns	50-100 ns
Endurance	>10 ¹⁶	>10 ¹⁶	~10 ⁴	~10 ⁵	~10 ⁶	10 ⁵ -10 ⁹	>10 ¹⁰	>10 ¹²	>10 ¹⁴

Khan, Keshavarzi, Datta, "The future of ferroelectric field-effect transistor technology", Nature Electronics 2020

Ferroelectric field-effect transistor

Ferroelectric Oxide



Properties of
Ferroelectric oxides

Non-volatility and
hysteresis

Plasticity,
Meta-plasticity and
Anti-plasticity

Negative dielectric
permittivity/negative
capacitance

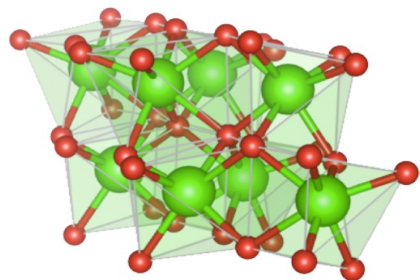
Stochasticity

Ferroelectric FET is one of most versatile transistor technologies – ever conceived.

Khan, Keshavarzi, Datta. "The future of ferroelectric field-effect transistors." *Nature Electronics* 3, 588 (2020).

Ferroelectric field-effect transistor

Ferroelectric Oxide



Properties of
Ferroelectric oxides

Non-volatility and
hysteresis

Plasticity,
Meta-plasticity and
Anti-plasticity

Negative dielectric
permittivity/negative
capacitance

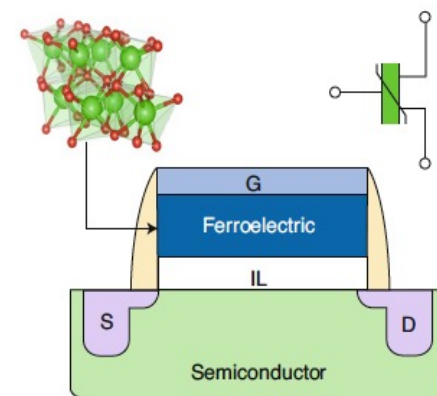
Stochasticity

Transistor
physics

Transconductance
gain

Circuit-level design

Ferroelectric field-effect transistor



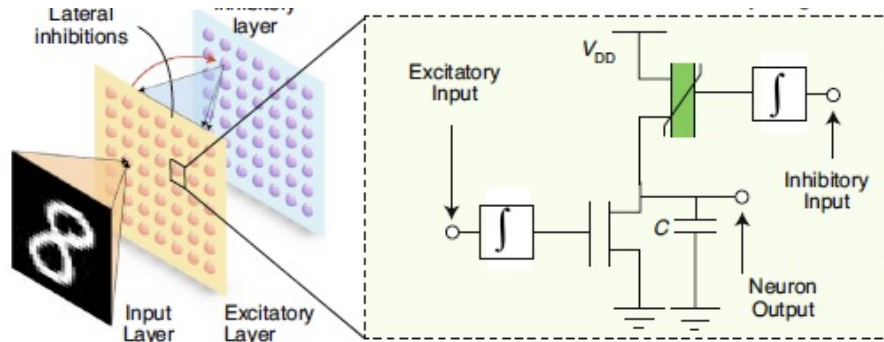
Properties enabled by
a transistor structure

Ferroelectric FET is one of most versatile transistor technologies – ever conceived.

Khan, Keshavarzi, Datta. "The future of ferroelectric field-effect transistors." *Nature Electronics* 3, 588 (2020).

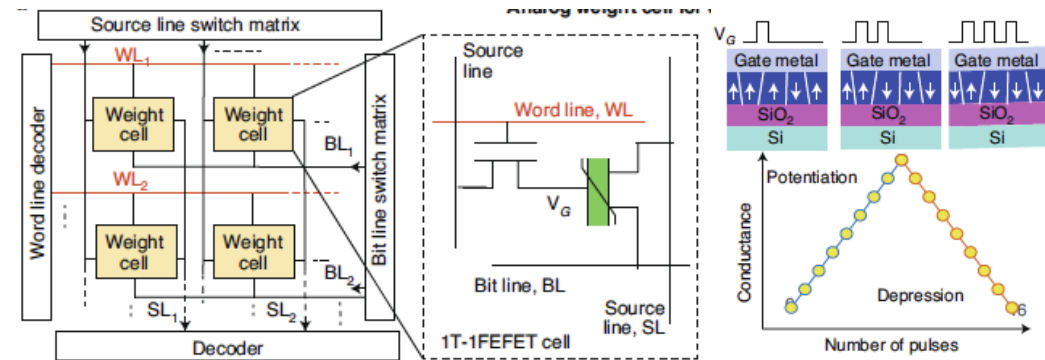
Ferroelectric FET Applications

Ferroelectric neurons for spiking neural networks



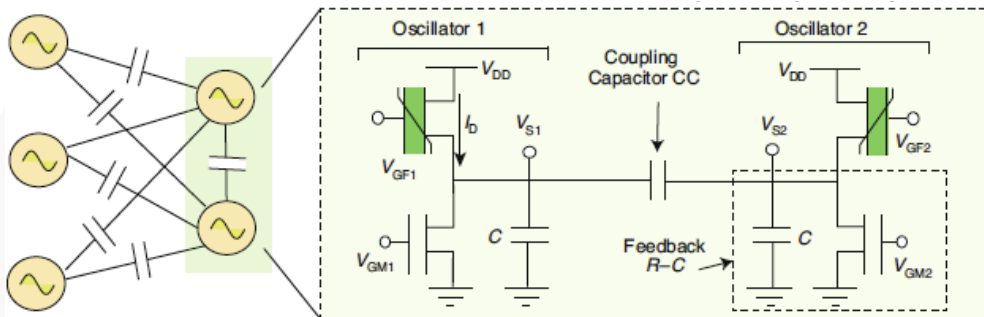
Wang et al. Int. Electron Dev. Meeting (IEDM) 2018.

FE synapses for deep neural network accelerators



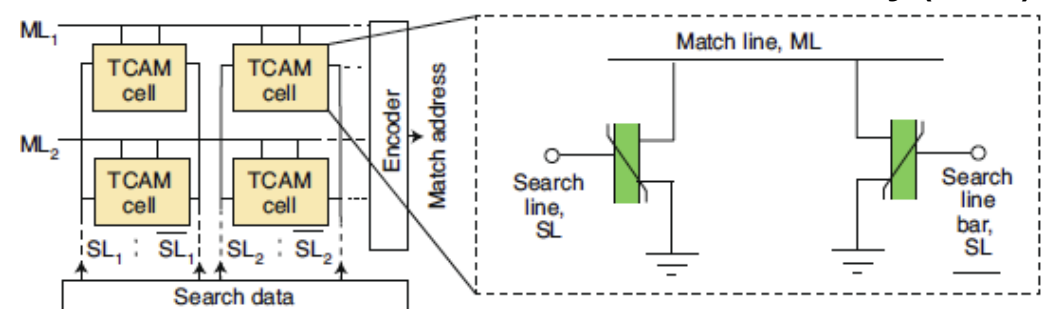
Aabrar et al. VLSI Symp. 2022.

Ferroelectric oscillators for time dynamical systems



Z. Wang et al. EDL 2017

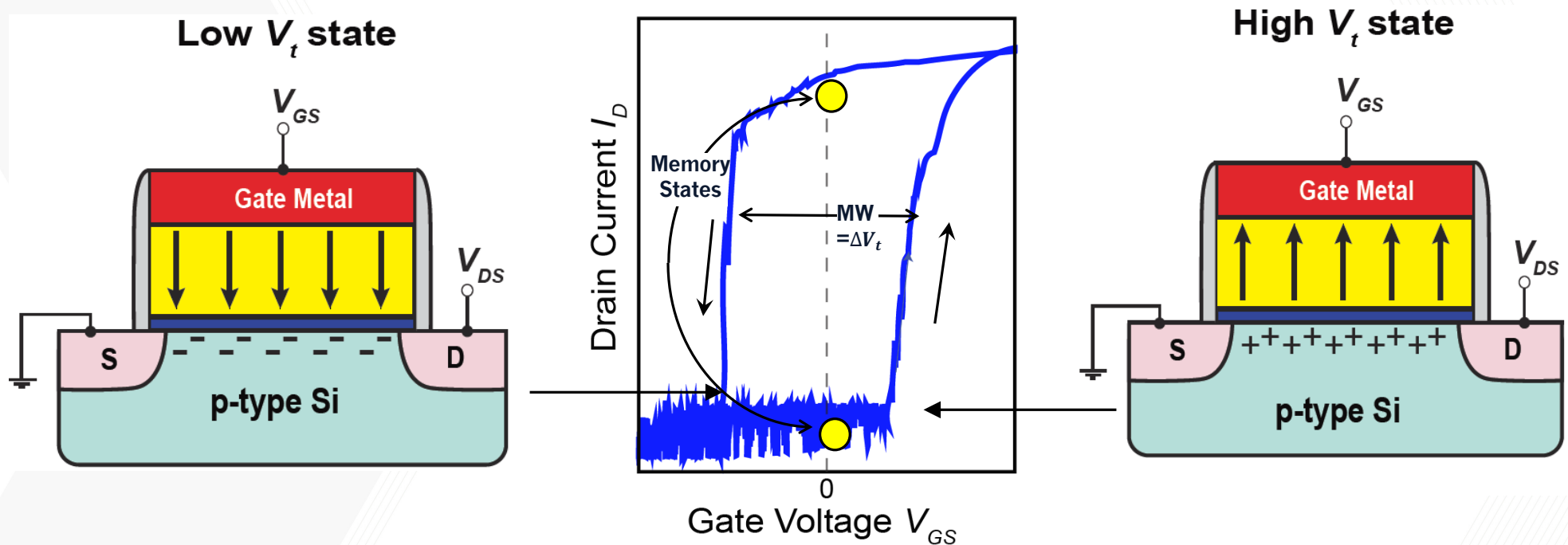
Ferroelectric content addressable memory (CAM)



Take-away #1

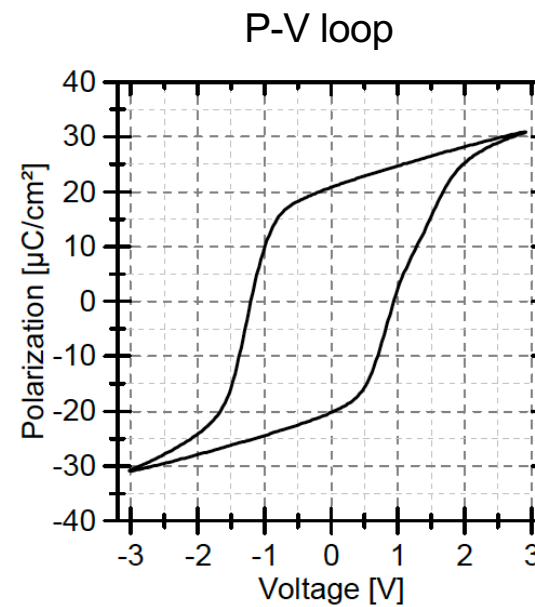
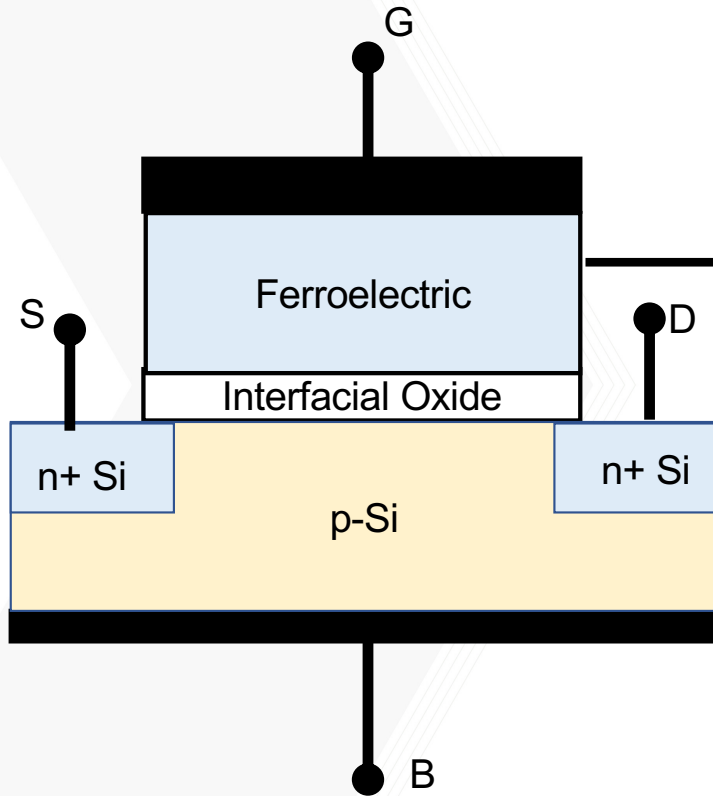
Ferroelectric Field-Effect Transistors are versatile!

Ferroelectric field-effect transistors (FEFETs)



FEFET is a FET with the threshold voltage shifted by the remnant polarization.

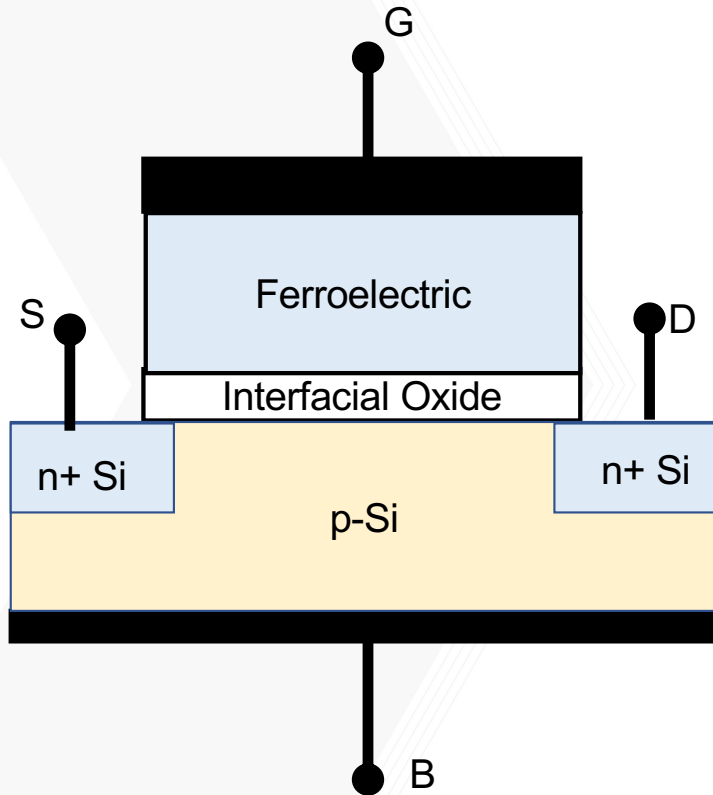
An Experimental FEFET: Does the electrostatics make sense?



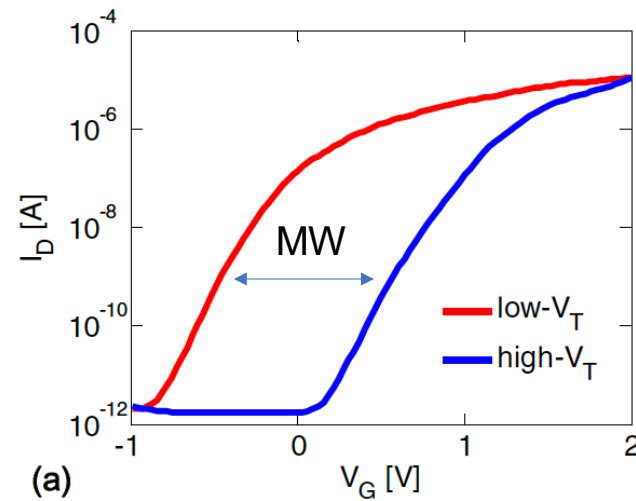
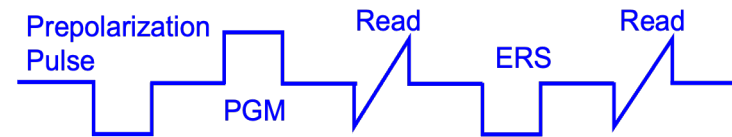
$$P_r = 20 \mu\text{C}/\text{cm}^2$$
$$V_{\text{max}} = 2 \text{ V}$$

Trentzsch et al. IEDM 2016

An Experimental FEFET: Does the electrostatics make sense?



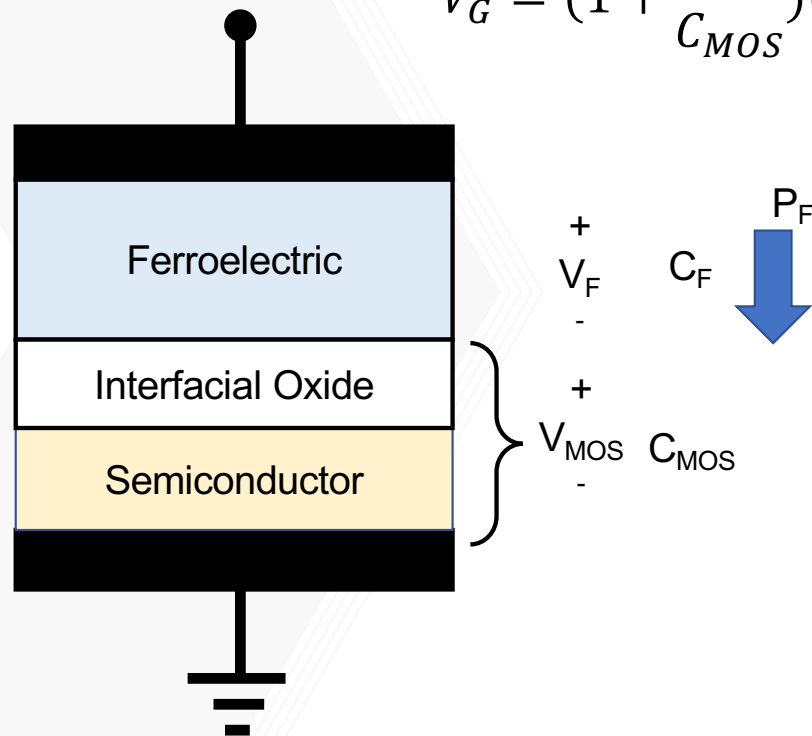
Memory Window



$V_{\text{write}} = \pm 4 \text{ V}$
 $\text{MW} \sim 1 \text{ V}$

Trentzsch et al. IEDM 2016

Does the electrostatics work out?

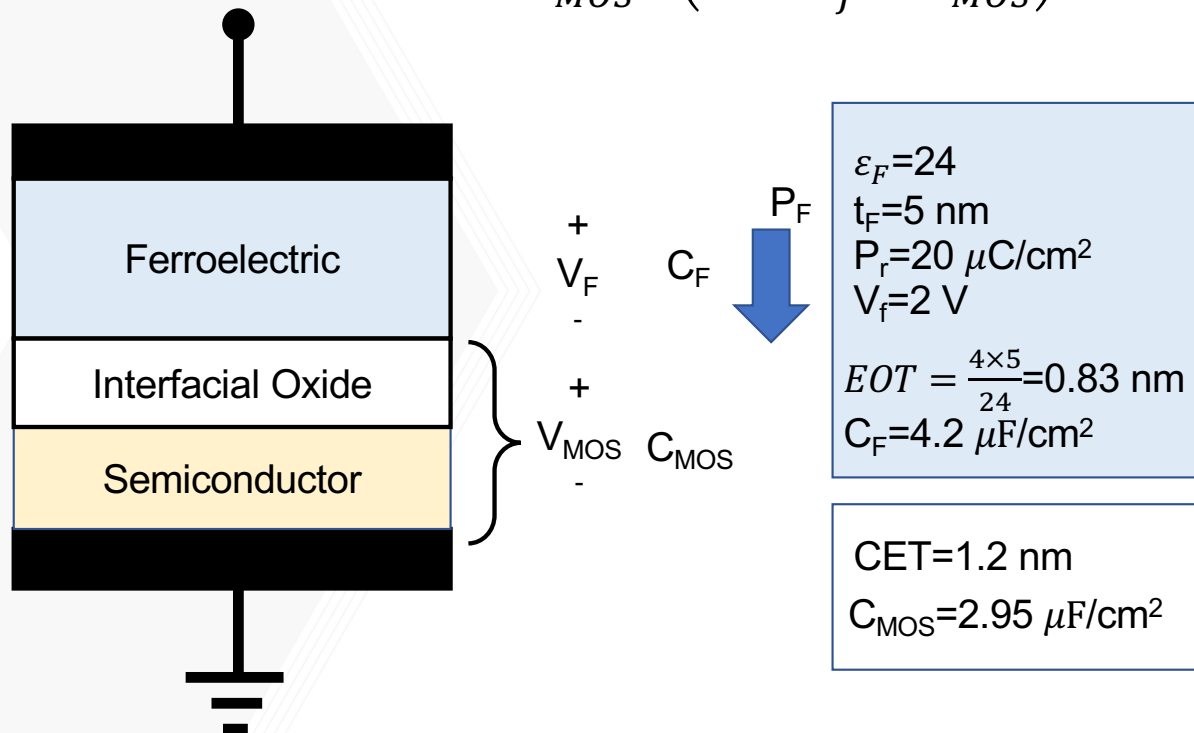


$$V_G = \left(1 + \frac{C_f}{C_{MOS}}\right) \left(V_f + \frac{P_f}{C_f + C_{MOS}}\right)$$

$V_F = \frac{C_{MOS}}{C_f + C_{MOS}} V_G + \frac{P_f}{C_f + C_{MOS}}$	$V_D = \frac{C_F}{C_F + C_{MOS}} V_G + \frac{-P_f}{C_f + C_{MOS}}$
↑	↑
Standard Electrostatics	Contribution from Polarization

Does the electrostatics work out?

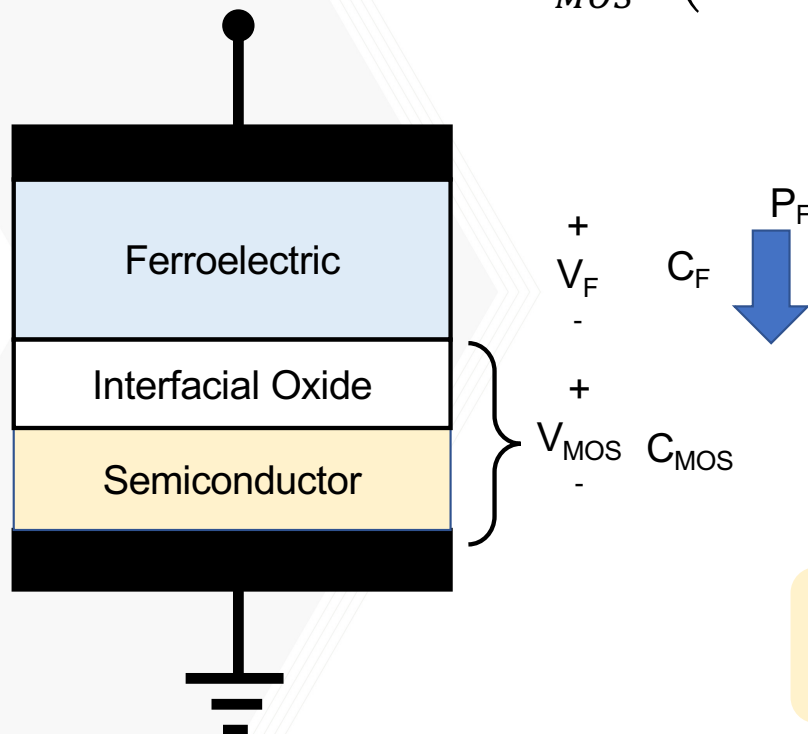
$$V_G = \left(1 + \frac{C_f}{C_{MOS}}\right) \left(V_f + \frac{P_f}{C_f + C_{MOS}}\right) = \left(1 + \frac{4.2}{2.95}\right) \left(2 + \frac{20}{4.2 + 2.95}\right) = 12 \text{ V}$$



A standard FEFET will need 12 V to switch!

Does the electrostatics work out?

$$V_G = \left(1 + \frac{C_f}{C_{MOS}}\right) \left(V_f + \frac{P_f}{C_f + C_{MOS}}\right) = \left(1 + \frac{4.2}{2.95}\right) \left(2 + \frac{20}{4.2 + 2.95}\right) = 12 \text{ V}$$



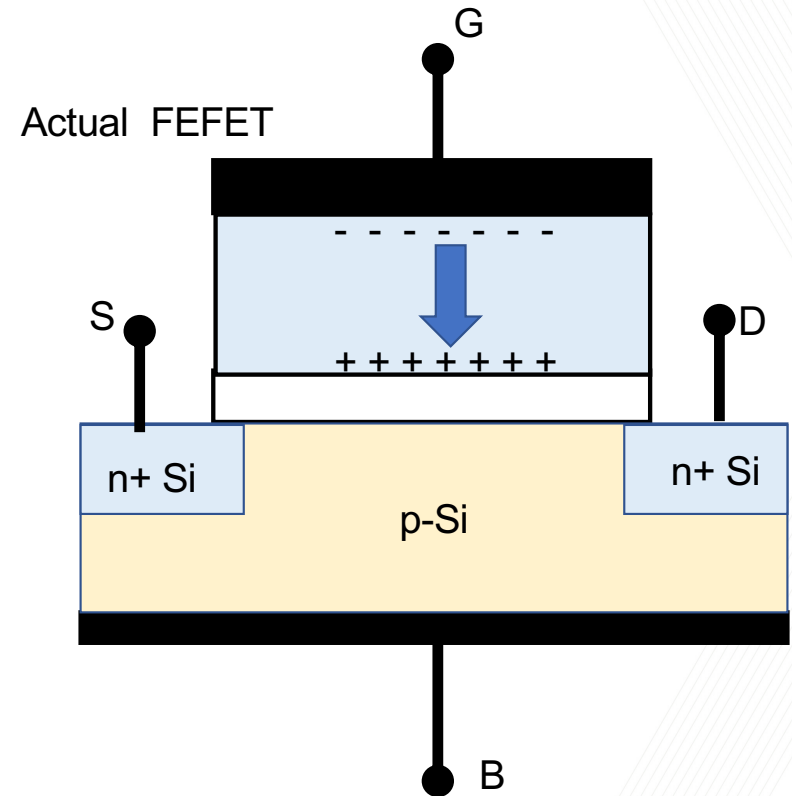
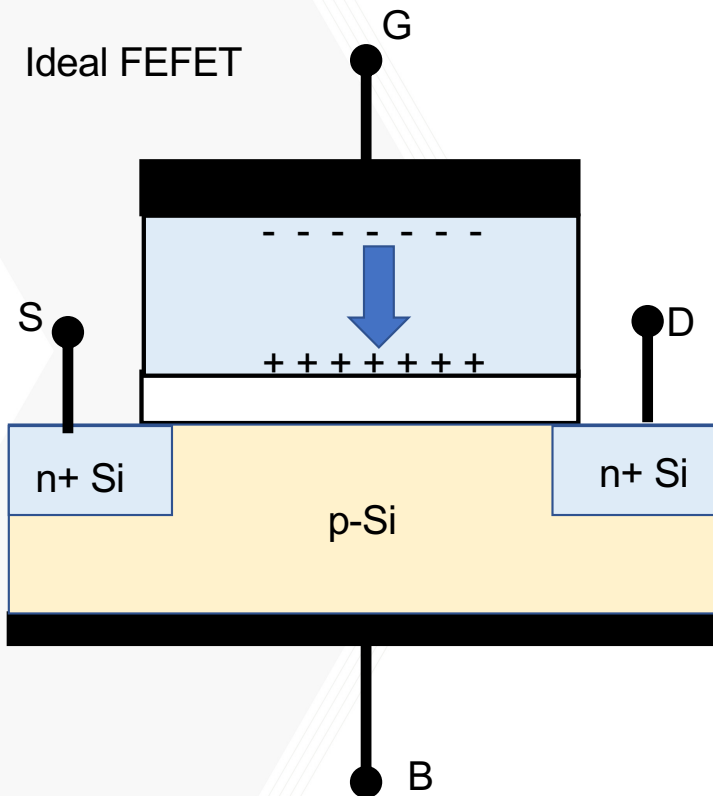
$$V_{MOS} = \frac{P_f}{C_{MOS} + C_F} + \frac{C_f}{C_{MOS} + C_F} V_G$$

$$= \left(\frac{20}{4.2 + 2.95} + \frac{4.2}{4.2 + 2.95} V_G\right) = 10 \text{ V}$$

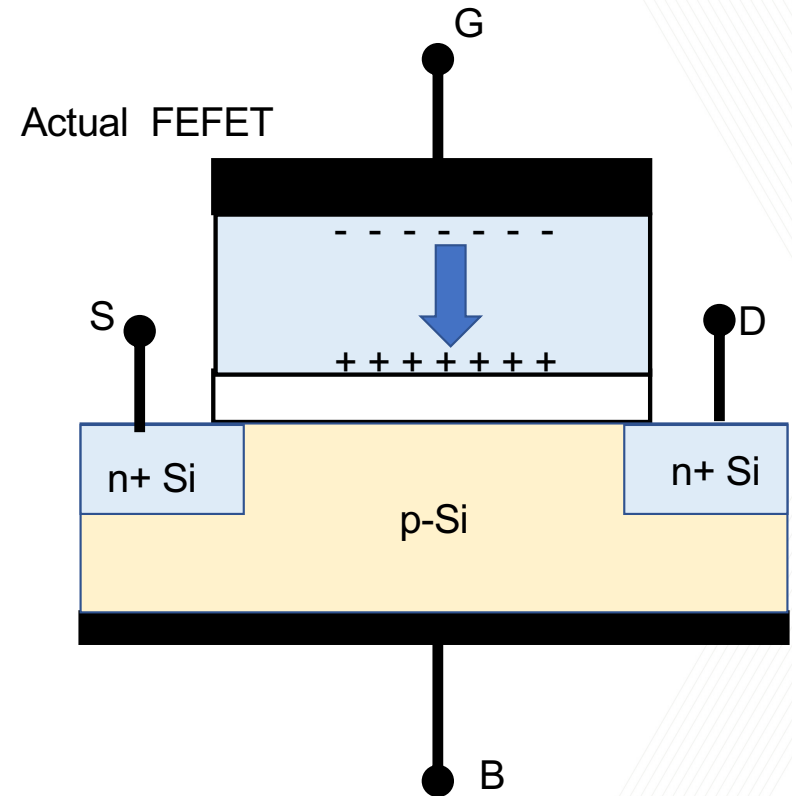
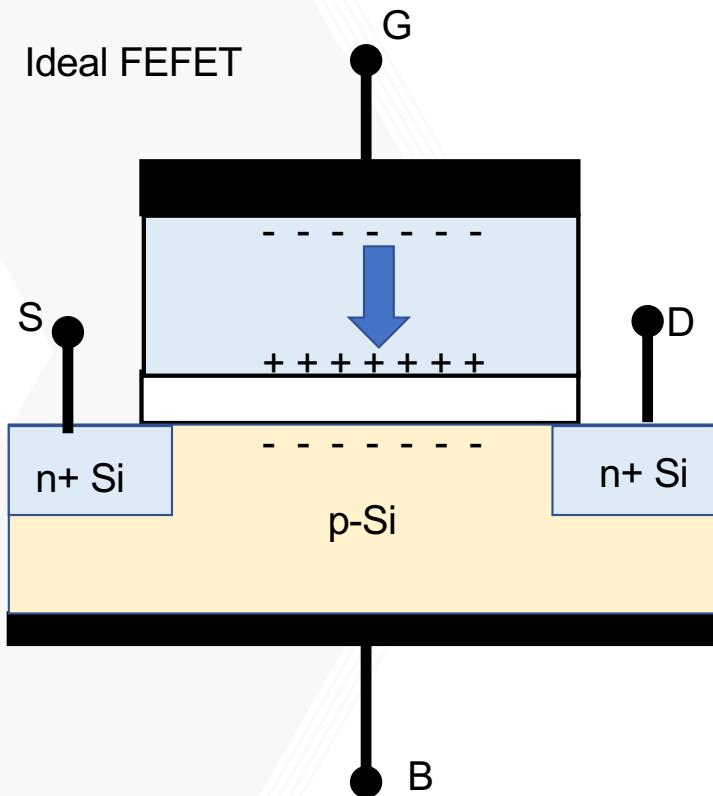
$$E_{ox} = \frac{1}{t_f} \left(\frac{P_f}{C_{MOS} + C_F} + \frac{C_f}{C_{MOS} + C_F} V_G\right) = 20 \text{ MV/cm}$$

The electric field across the interfacial oxide layer will be ~20 MV/cm.

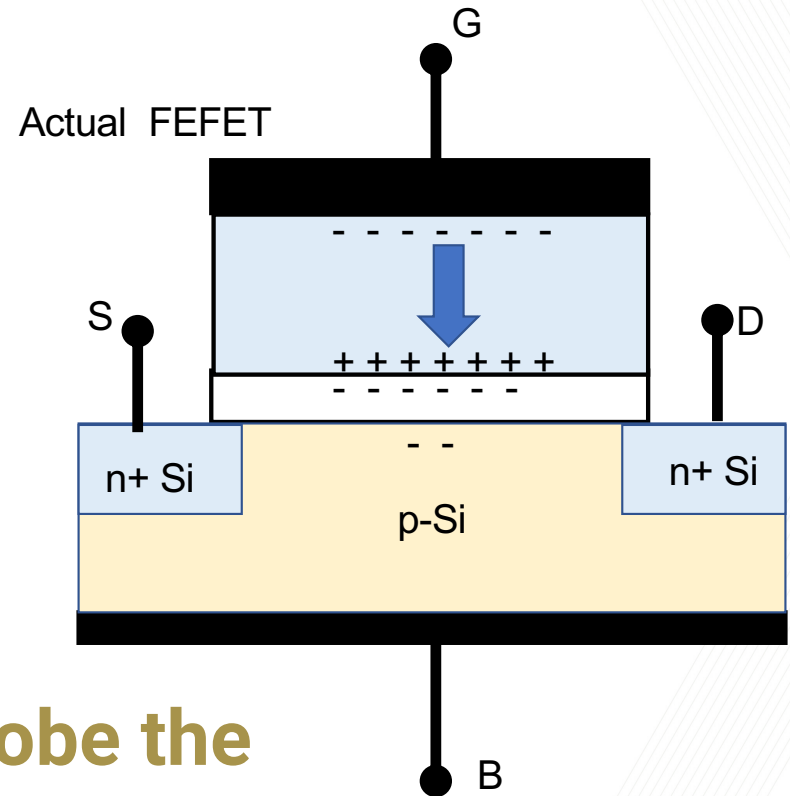
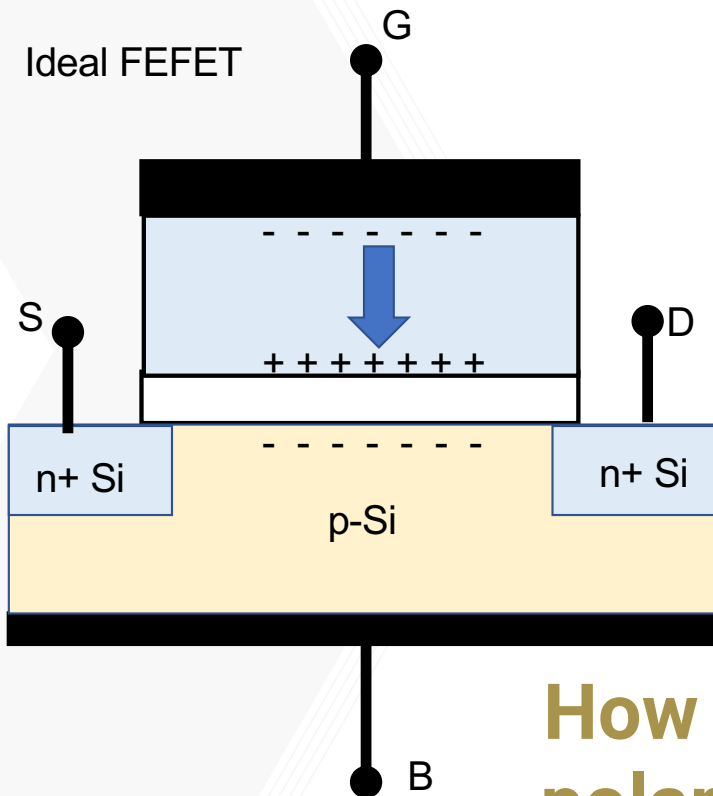
How does a FEFET work?



How does a FEFET work?

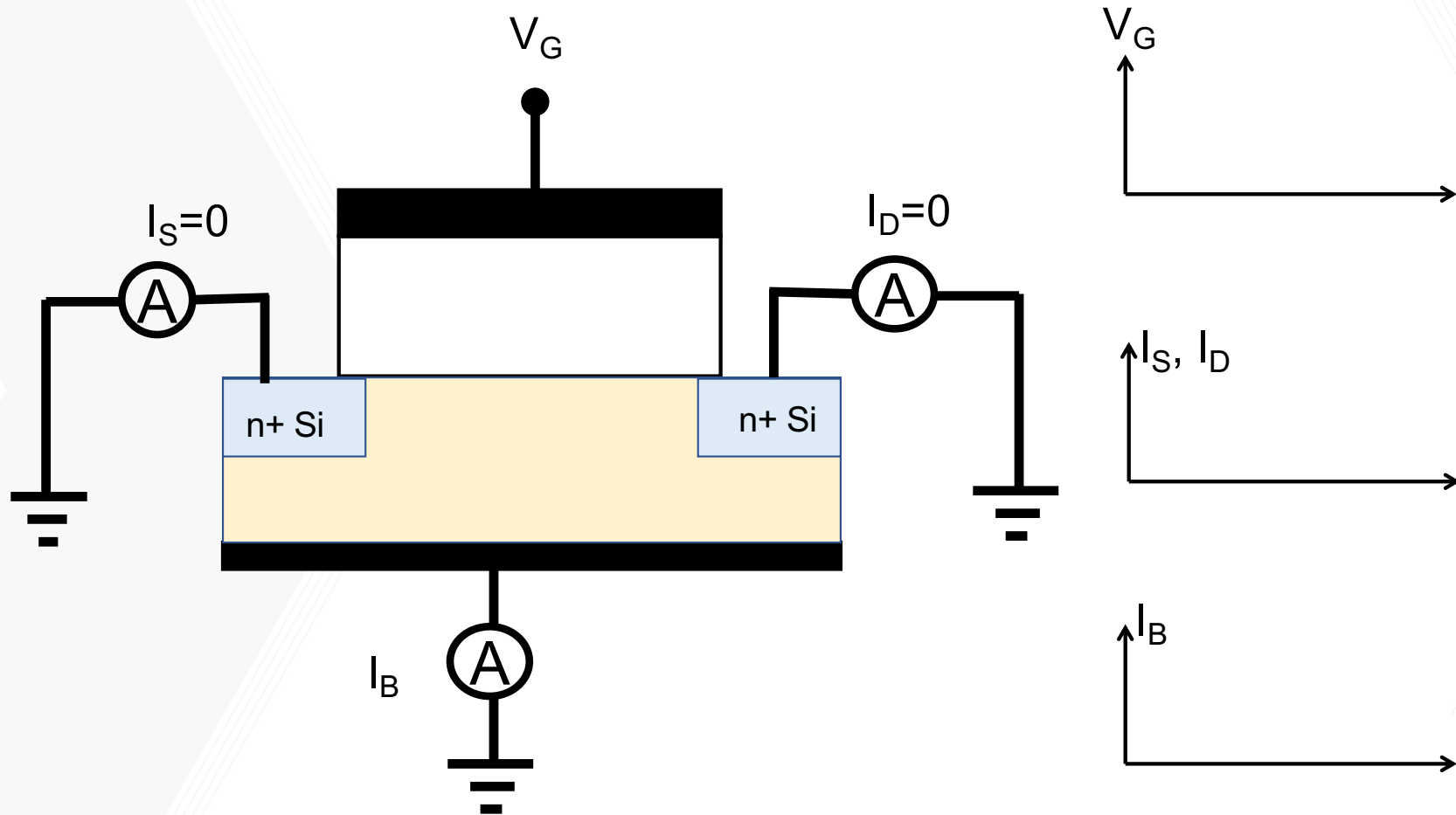


How does a FEFET work?

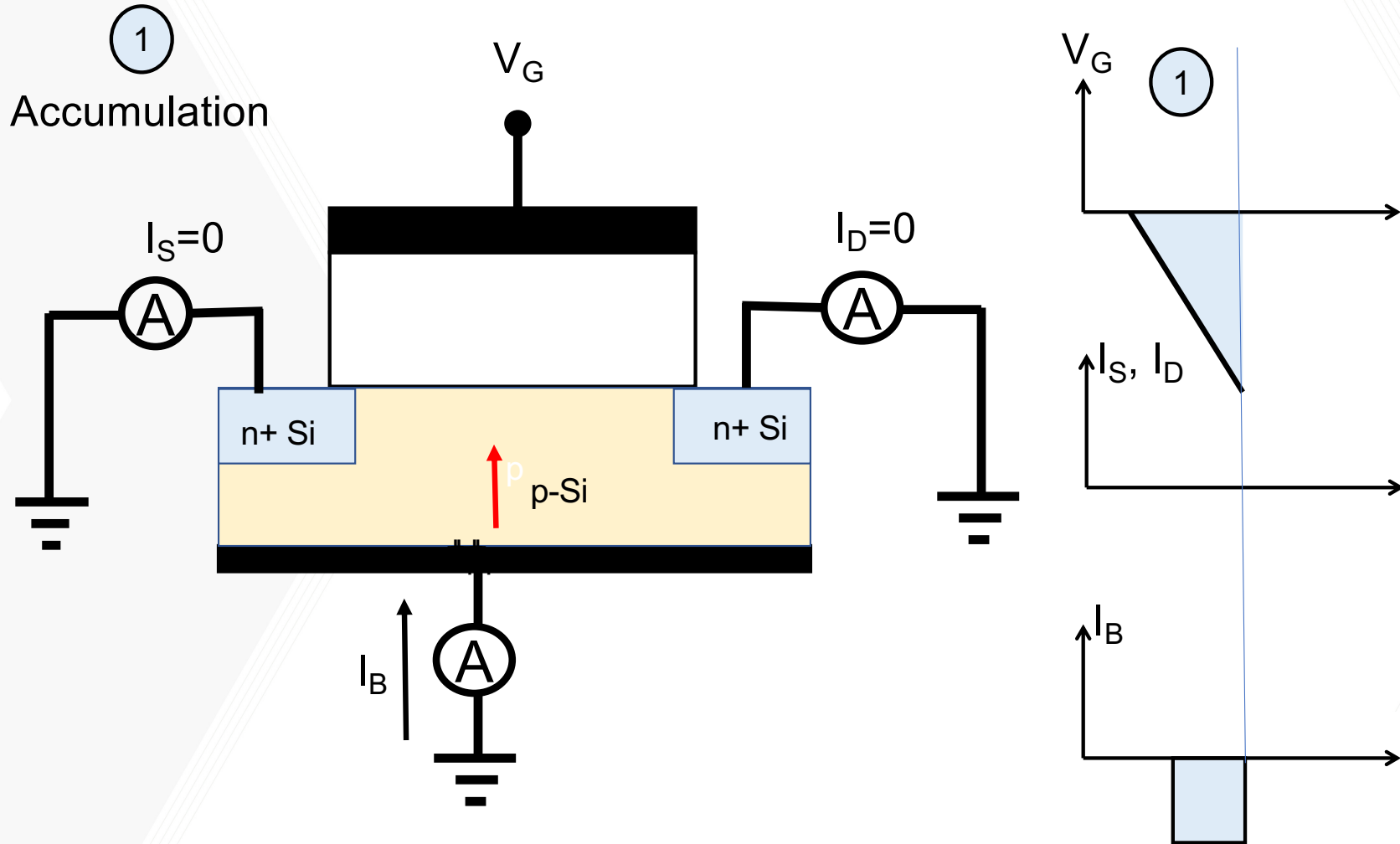


How can we probe the polarization screening dynamics?

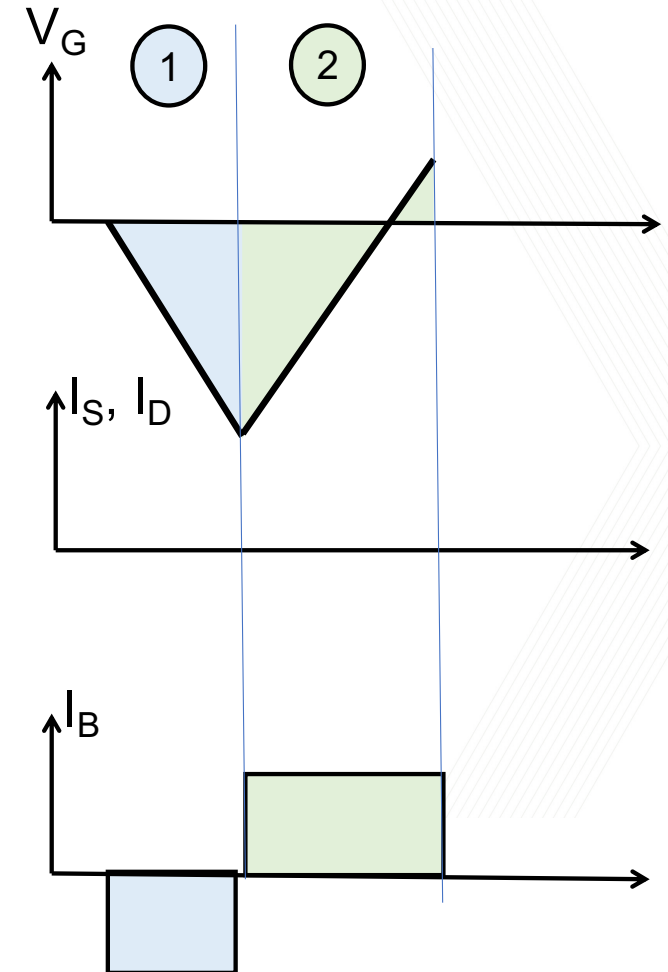
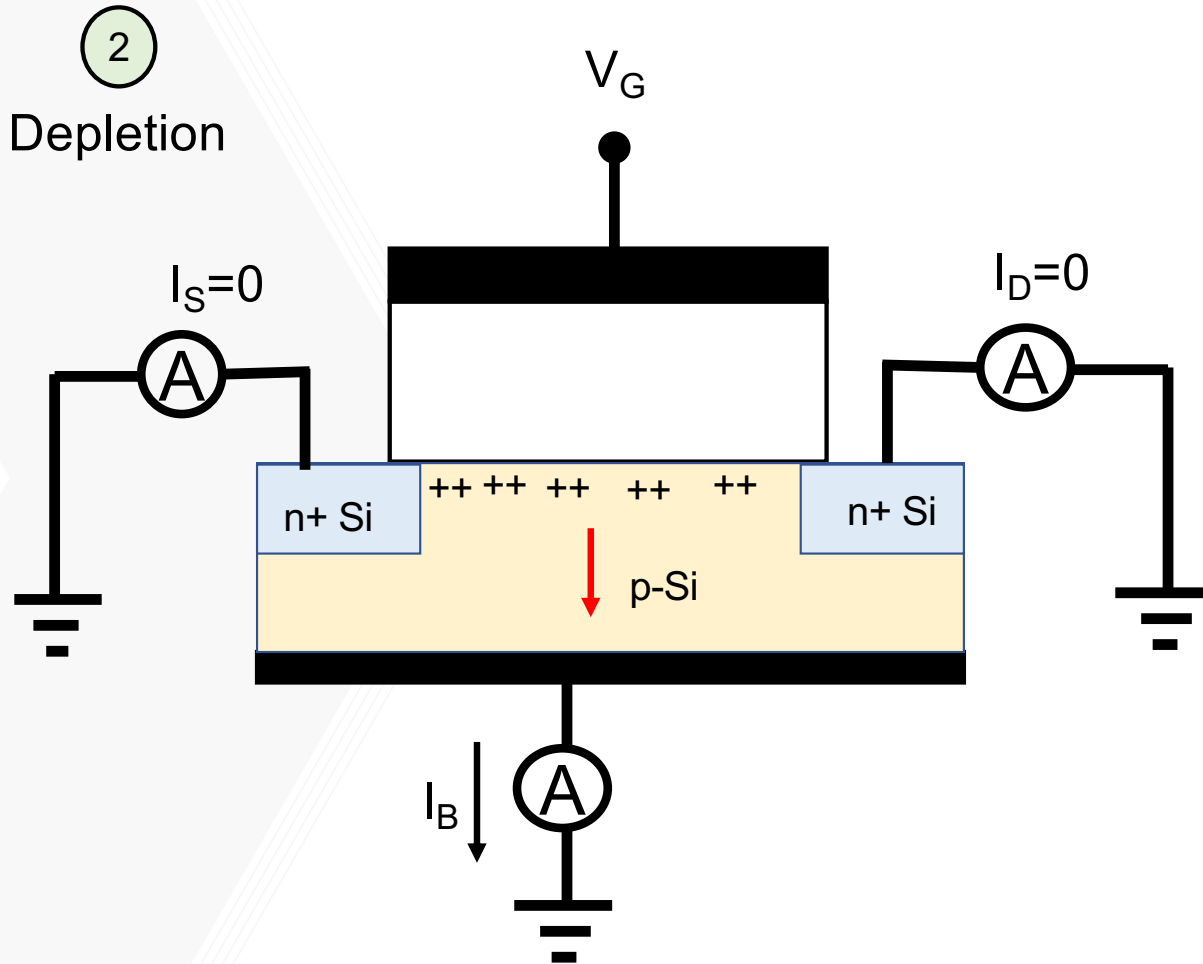
Carrier dynamics in a conventional MOSFET



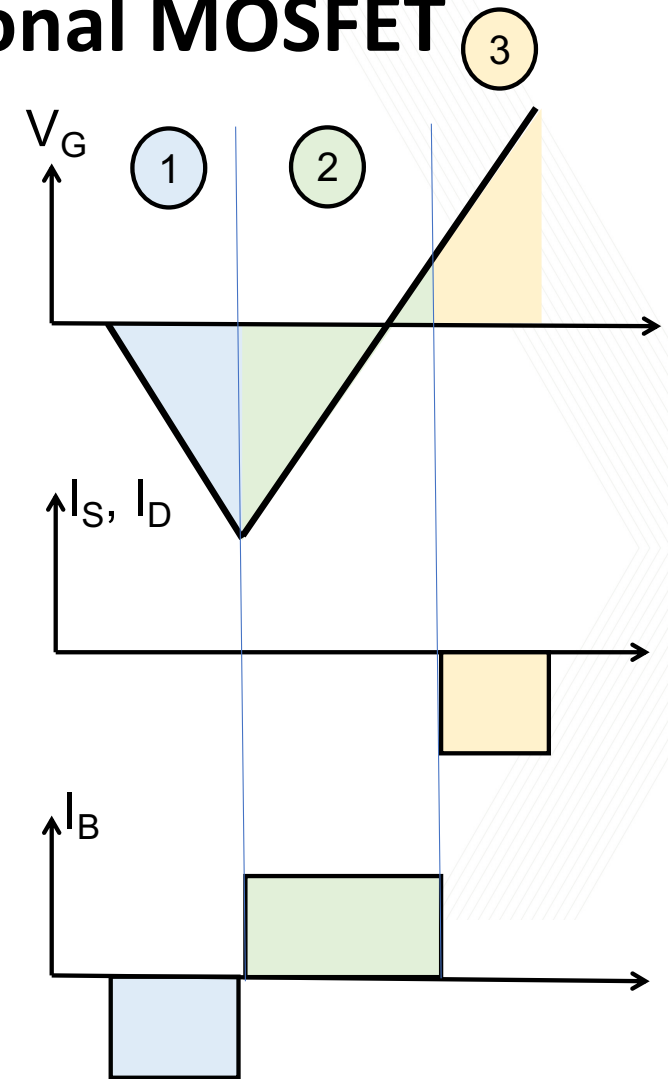
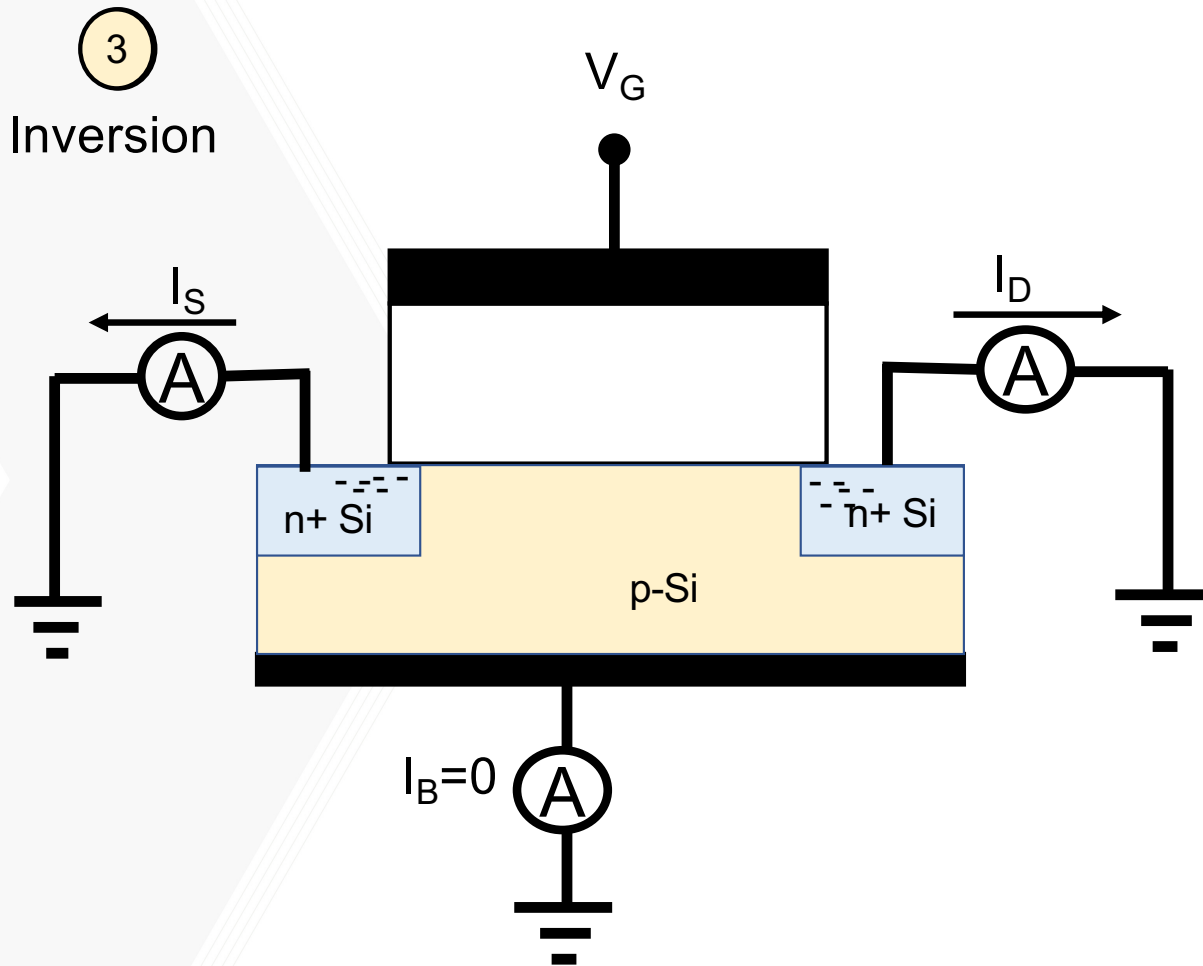
Carrier dynamics in a conventional MOSFET



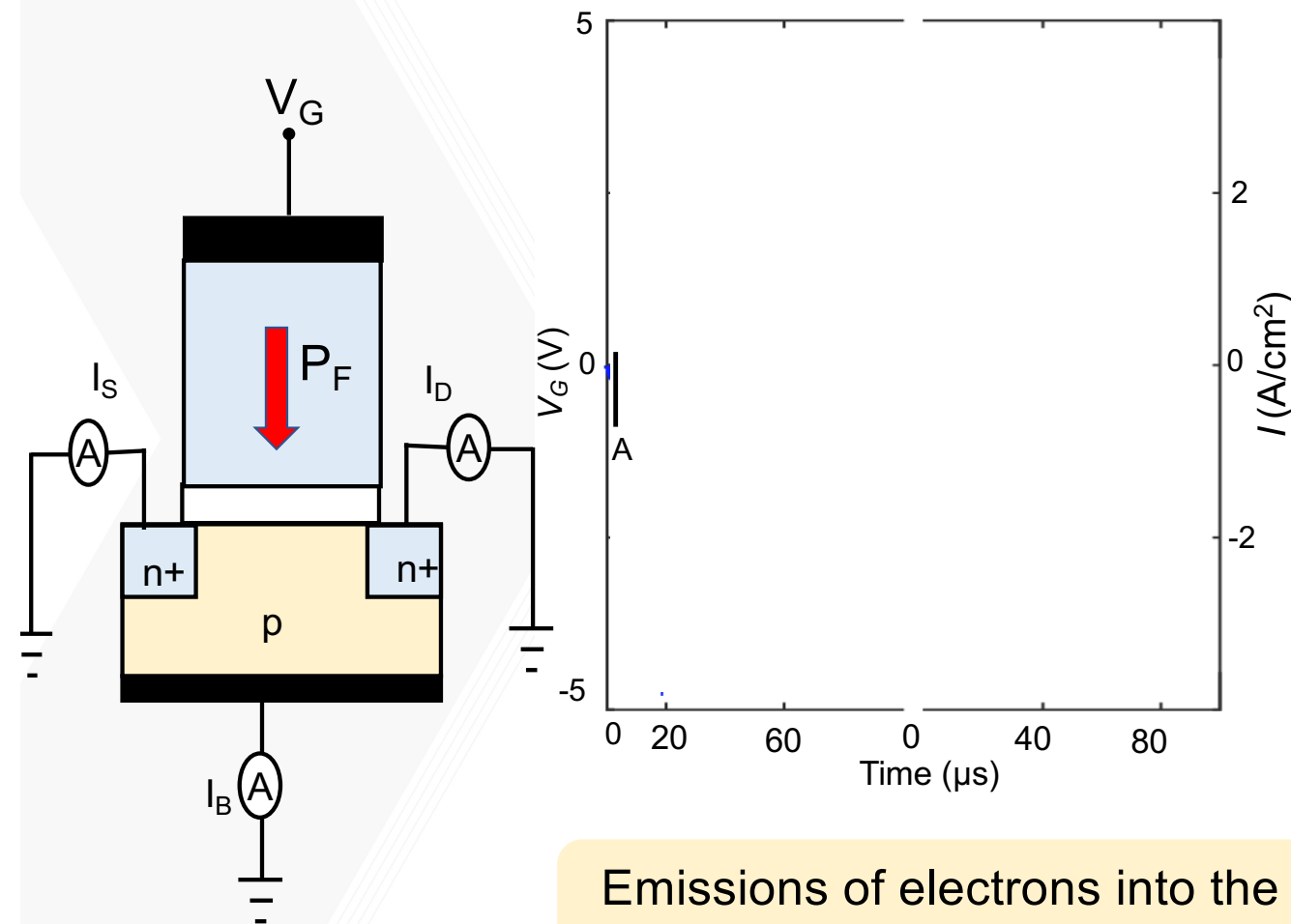
Carrier dynamics in a conventional MOSFET



Carrier dynamics in a conventional MOSFET



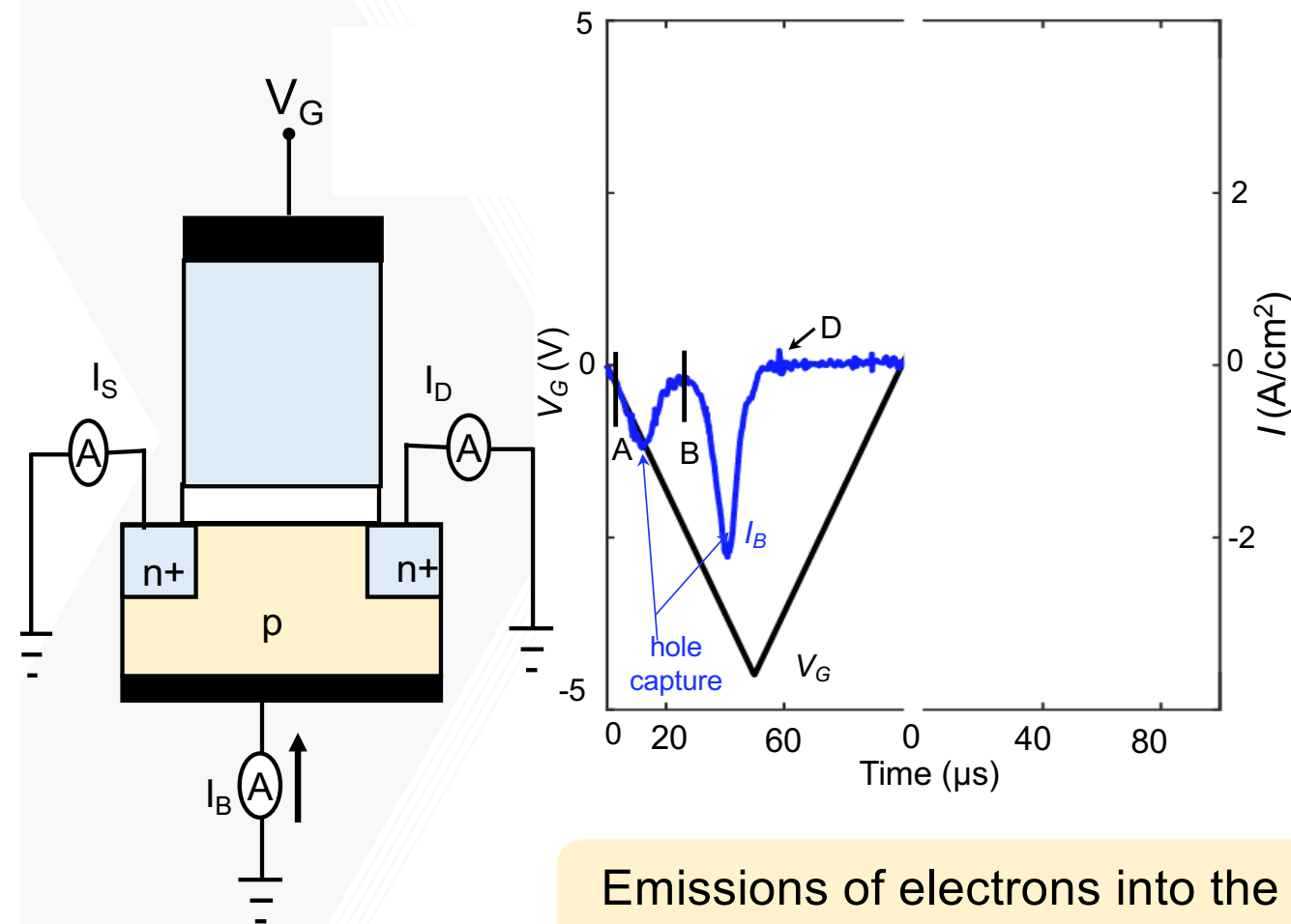
Trap Emission and Capture During Write



Emissions of electrons into the S/D during hole accumulation.

Tasneem et al. Trap Capture and Emission Dynamics in Ferroelectric Field-Effect Transistors and their Impact on Device Operation and Reliability, IEDM 2011.

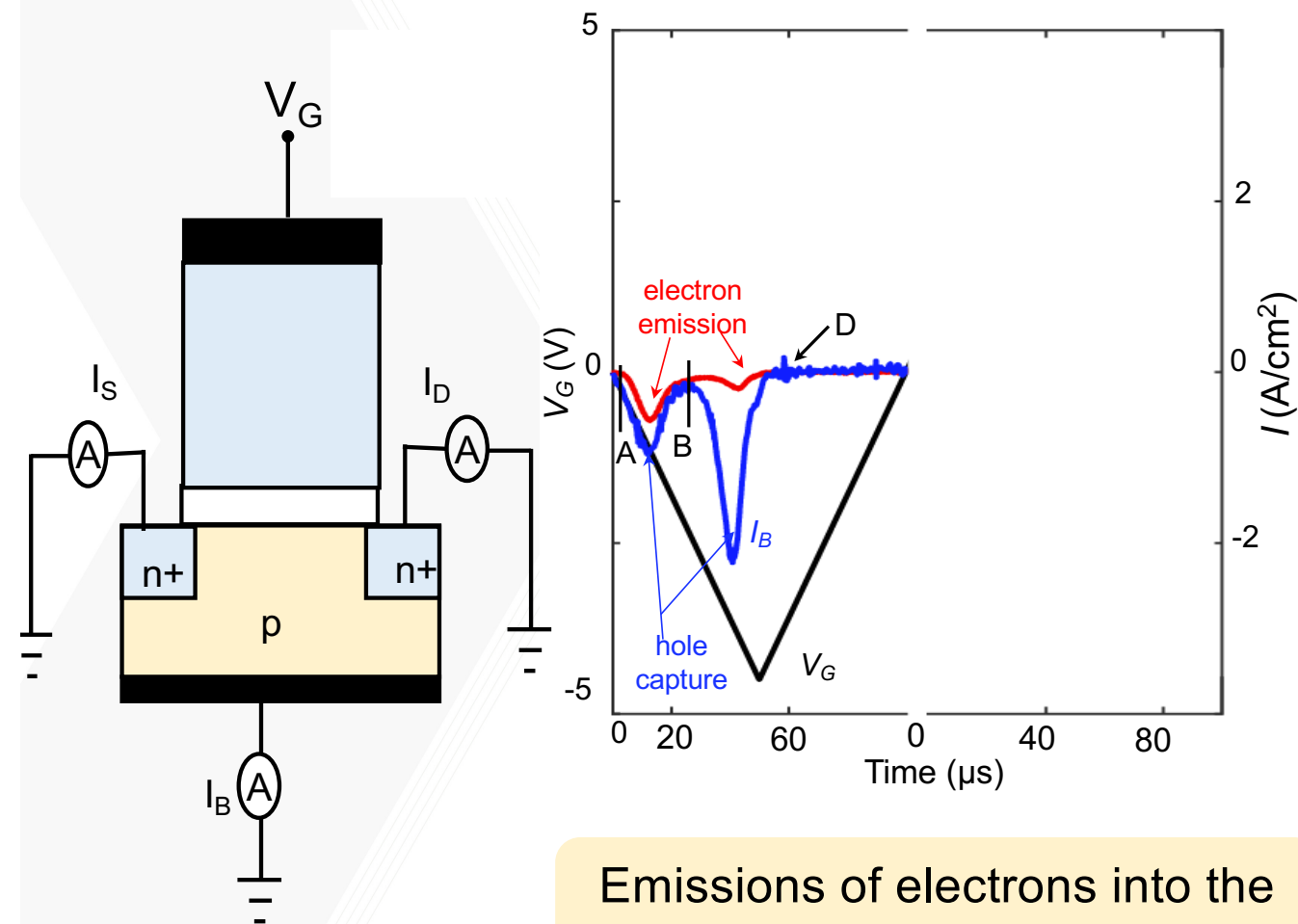
Trap Emission and Capture During Write



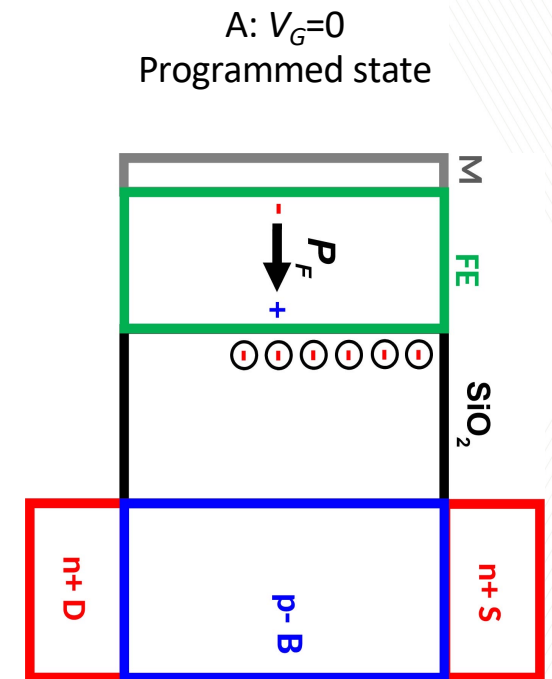
Emissions of electrons into the S/D during hole accumulation.

Tasneem et al. Trap Capture and Emission Dynamics in Ferroelectric Field-Effect Transistors and their Impact on Device Operation and Reliability, IEDM 2011.

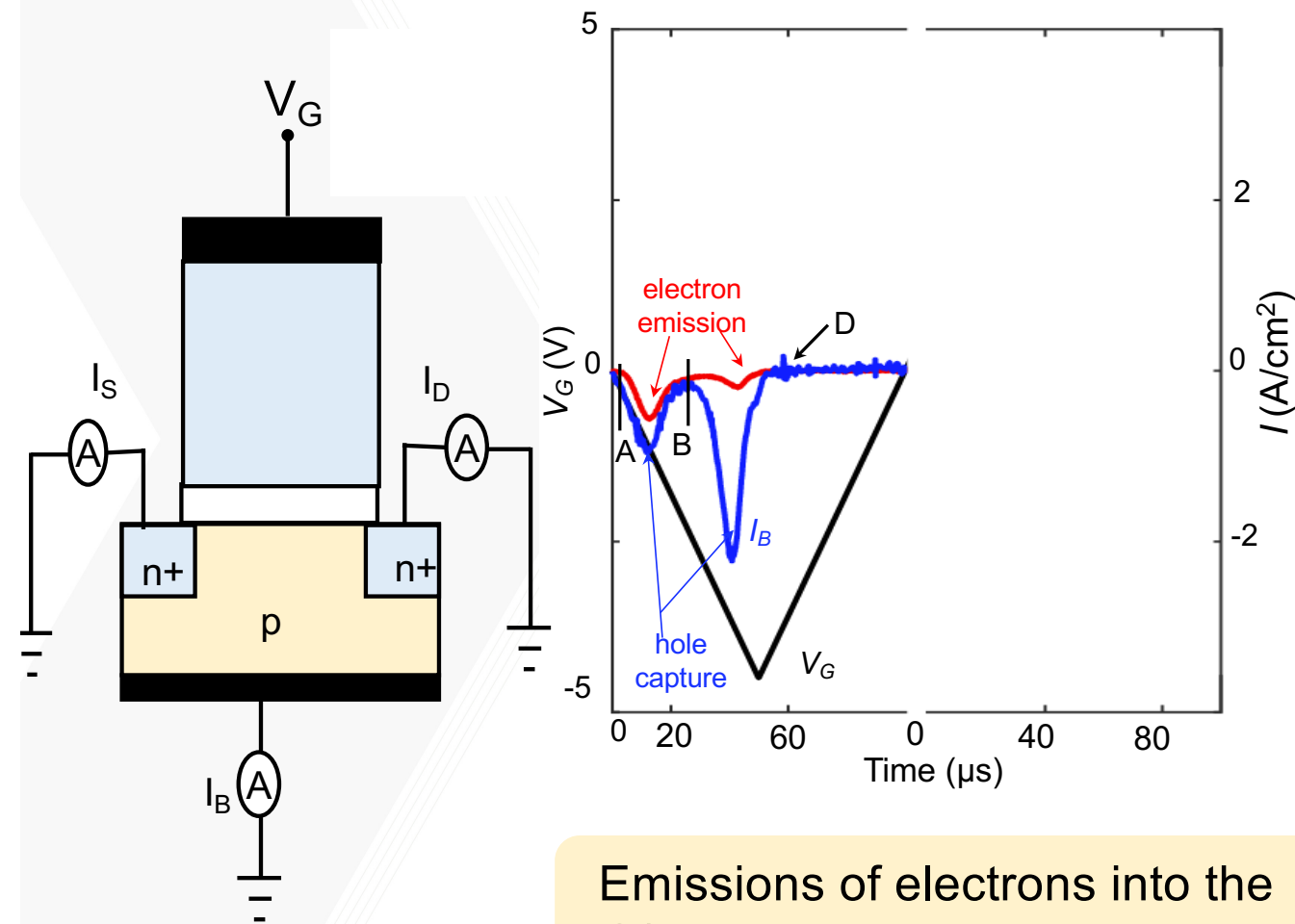
Trap Emission and Capture During Write



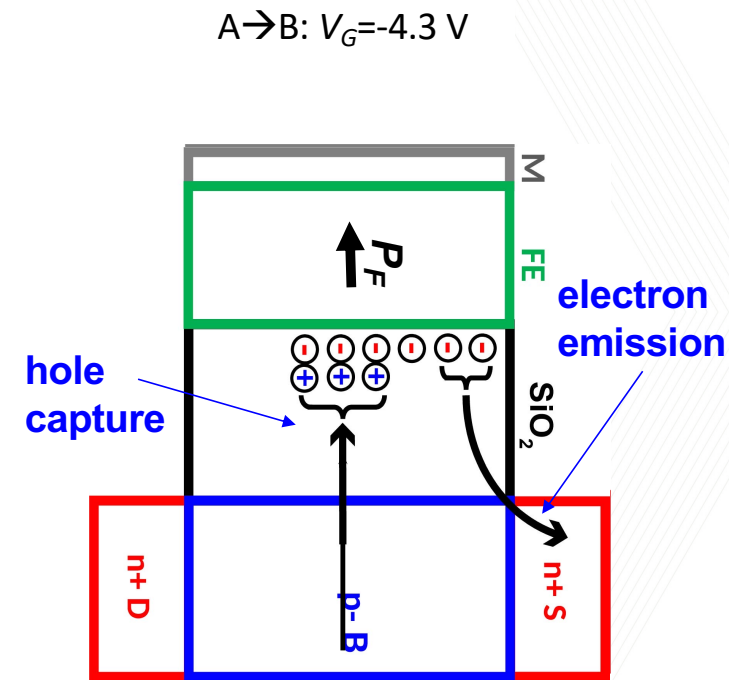
Emissions of electrons into the S/D during hole accumulation.



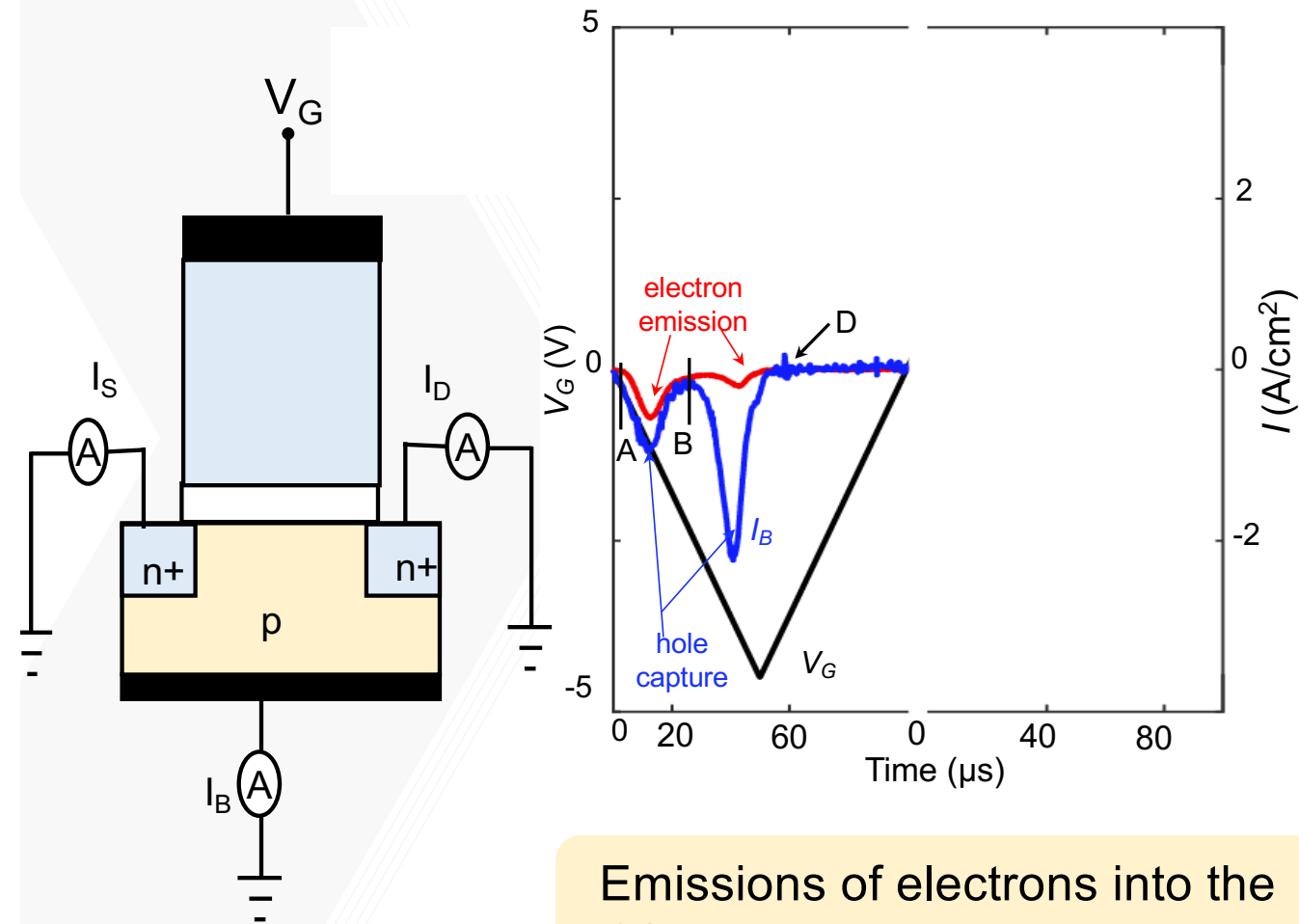
Trap Emission and Capture During Write



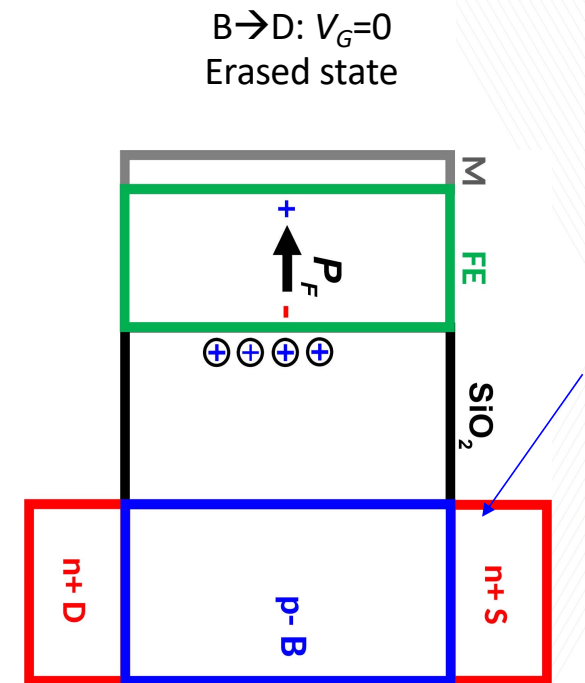
Emissions of electrons into the S/D during hole accumulation.



Trap Emission and Capture During Write



Emissions of electrons into the S/D during hole accumulation.

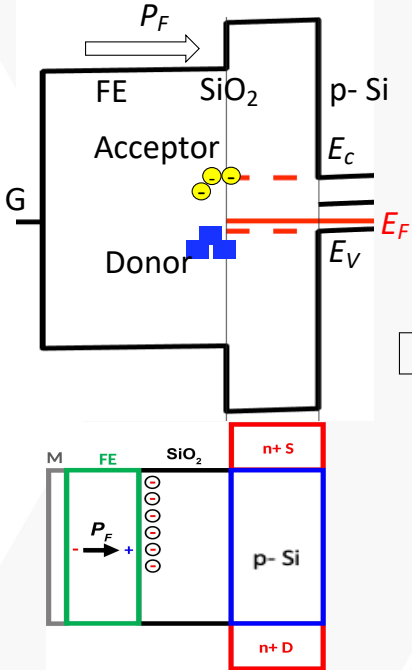


Trap Capture and Emission Dynamics

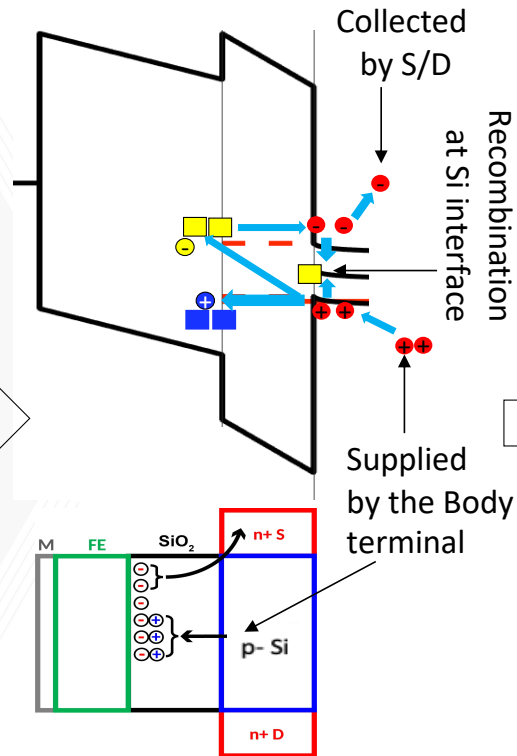
A: $V_G=0$

Programmed state

FE polarization

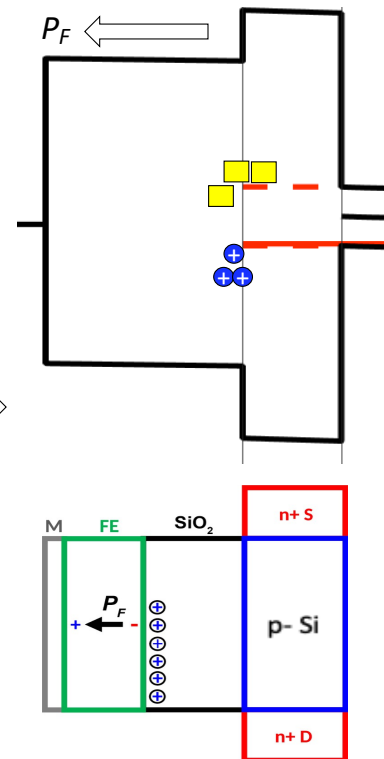


A $\rightarrow$ B: $V_G=-2.3$ V



C $\rightarrow$ D: $V_G=0$

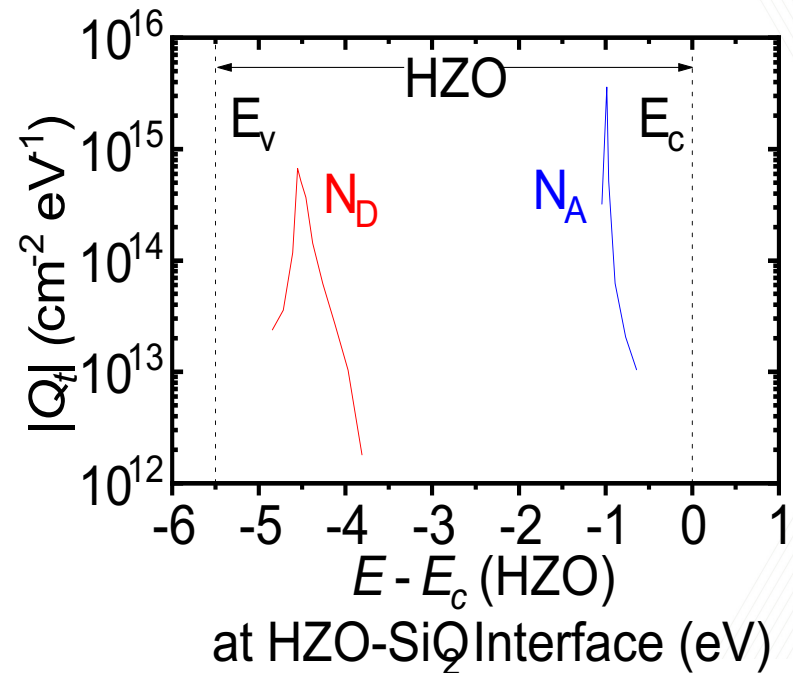
Erased state ($t_{delay}=0$)



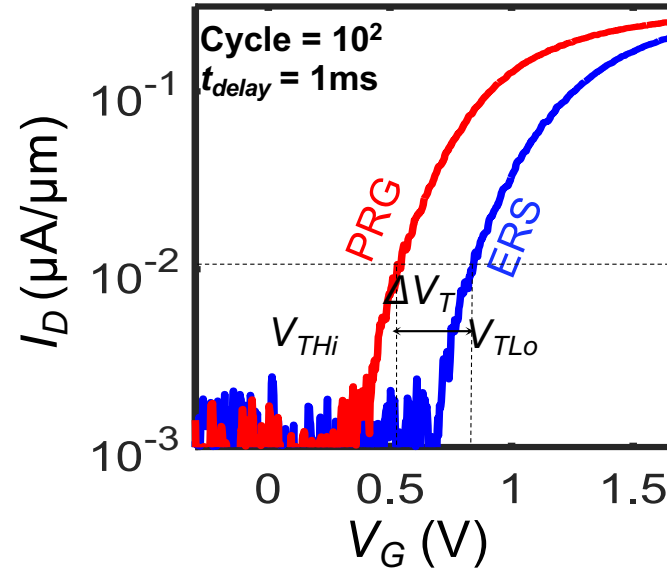
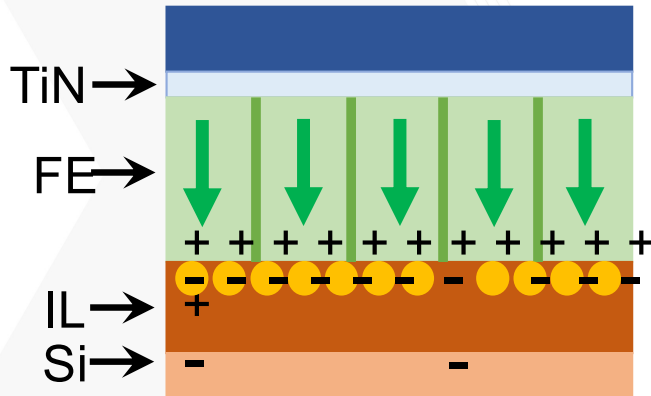
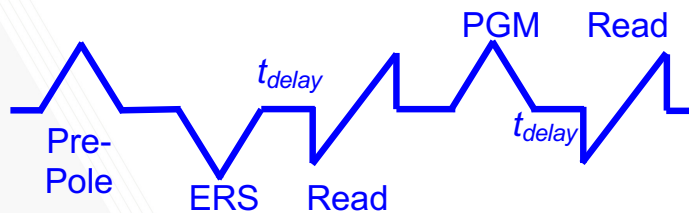
Trap Capture and Emission Dynamics

- Trap levels N_D and N_A are essentially discrete levels
- Donor type trap energy E_D is 0.93 eV above HZO E_v
- Acceptor type trap energy E_A is 0.98 eV below HZO E_c

Passlack, Tasneem et al. IEDM 2022.

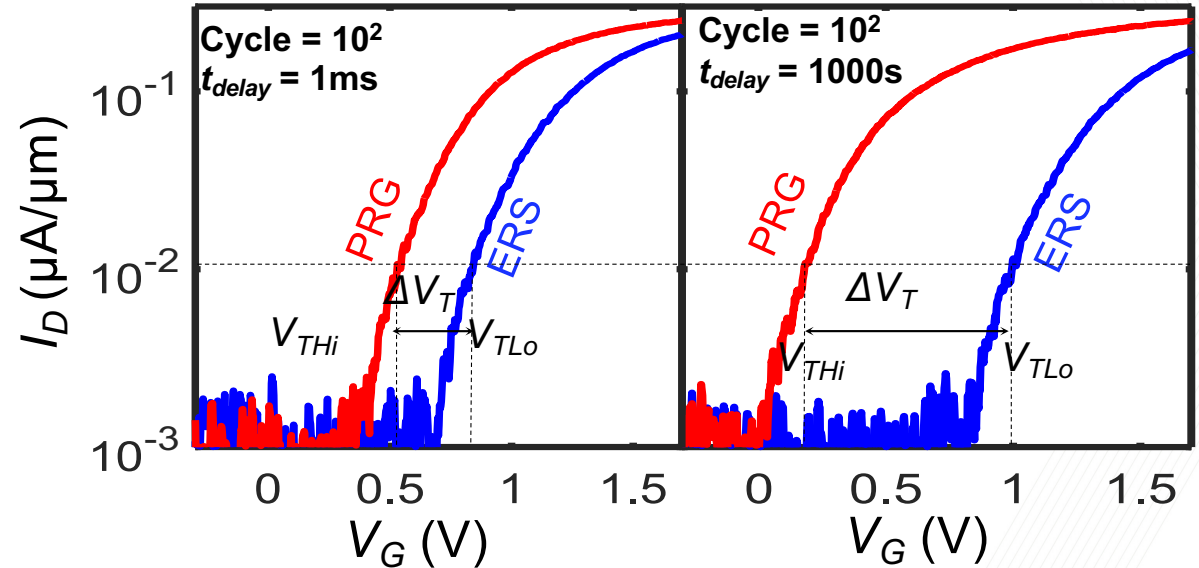
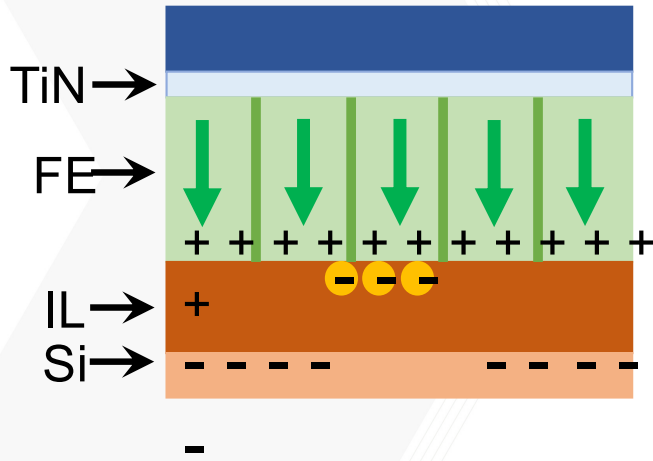
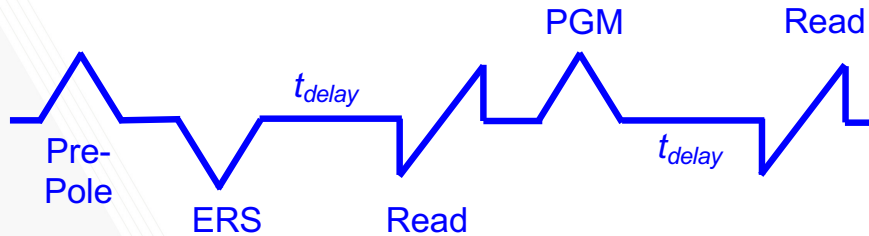


Read After Write Delay



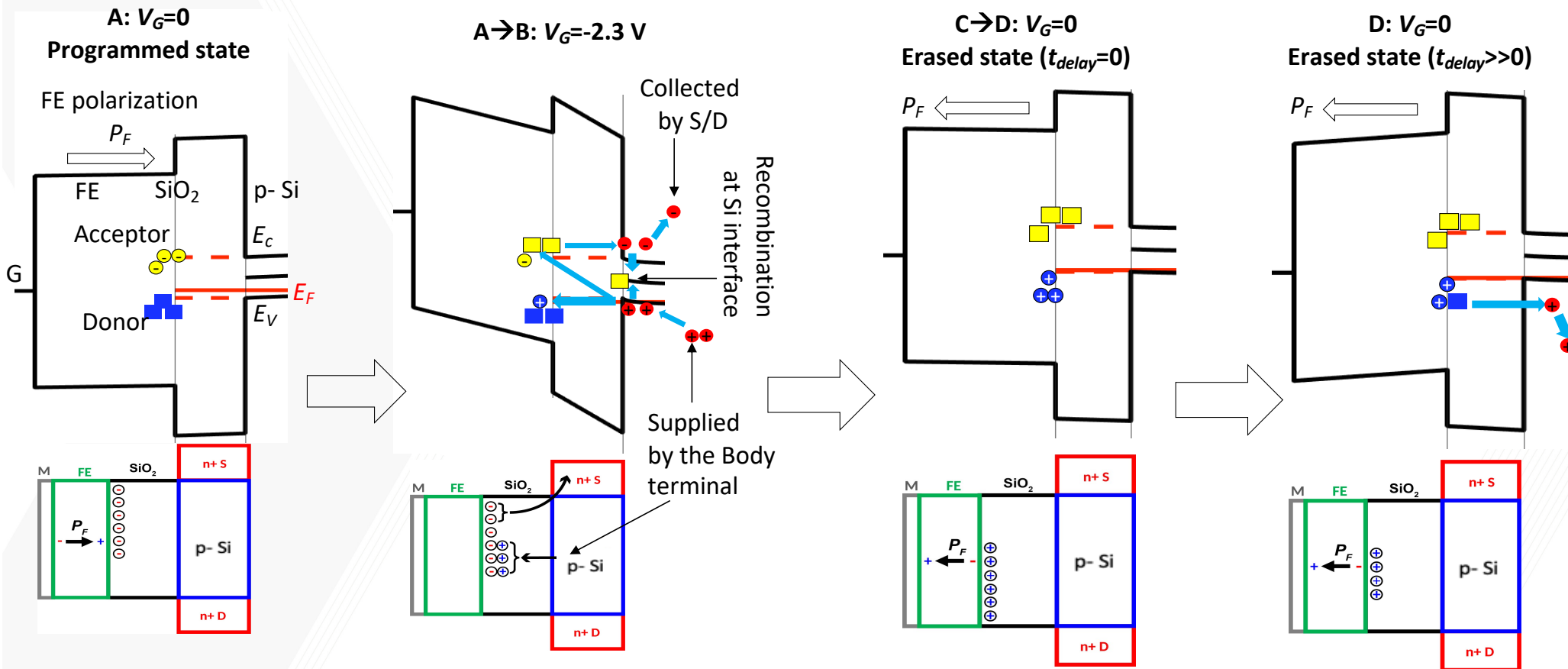
- Ferroelectric polarization is screened by interfacial traps.
- Delay allows for trap neutralization, increasing MW.

Read After Write Delay



- Ferroelectric polarization is screened by interfacial traps.
- Delay allows for trap neutralization, increasing MW.

Trap Capture and Emission Dynamics



Tasneem et al. Trap Capture and Emission Dynamics in Ferroelectric Field-Effect Transistors and their Impact on Device Operation and Reliability, IEDM 2011.

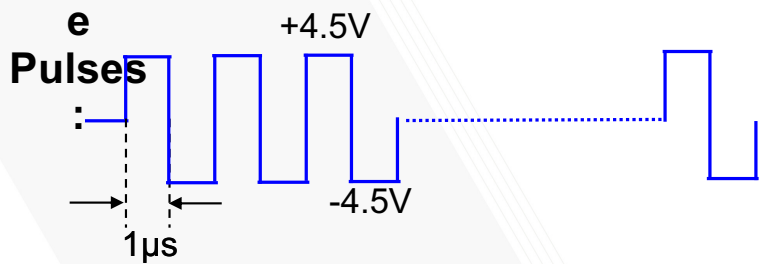
Take-away #2

Ferroelectric switching in a FEFET requires assistance from trap capture and emission dynamics!

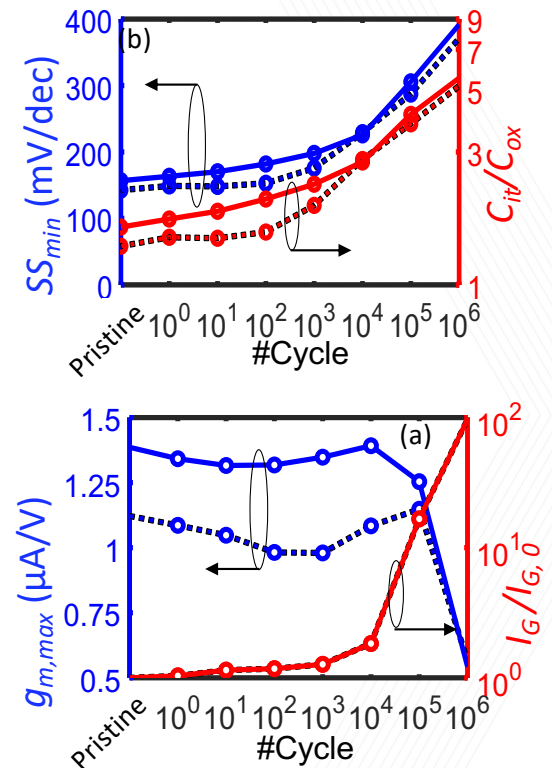
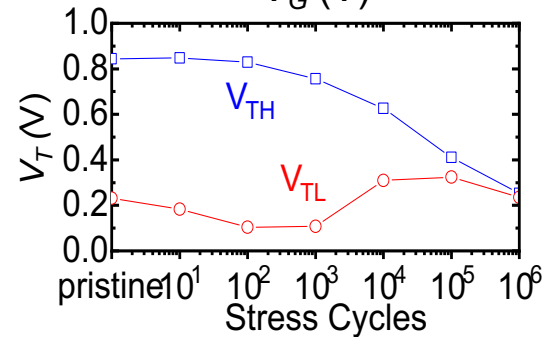
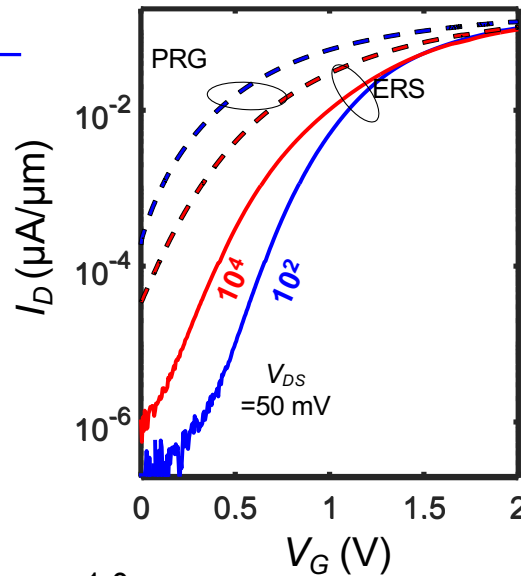
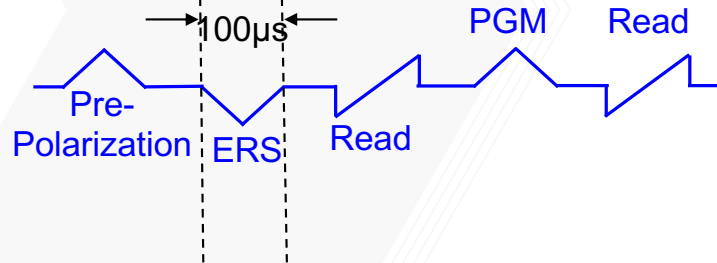
This is fundamental device physics of FEFETs!

$I_D - V_G$ during Fatigue Cycling

Fatigue



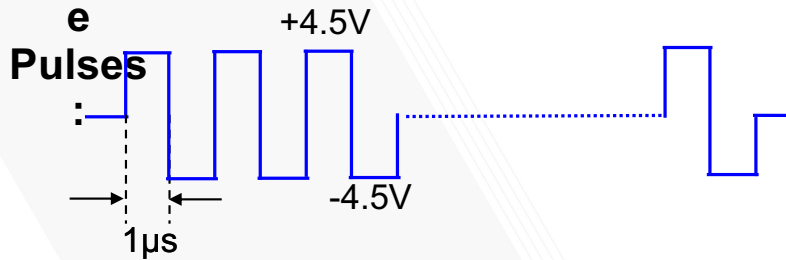
$I_D - V_G$:



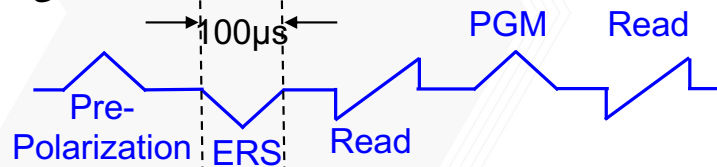
V_T decreases with cycling → Build-up of positive charge during cycling.

$P_F - V_G$ during Fatigue Cycling

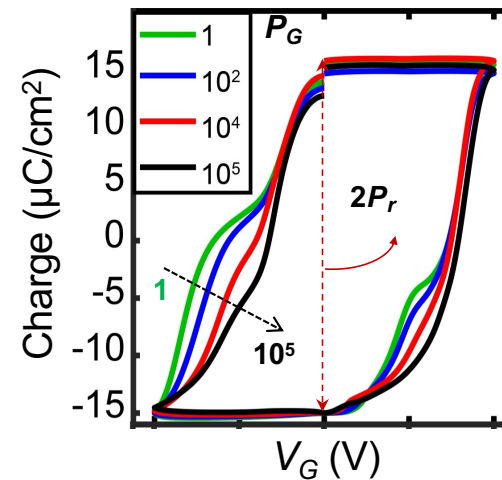
Fatigue



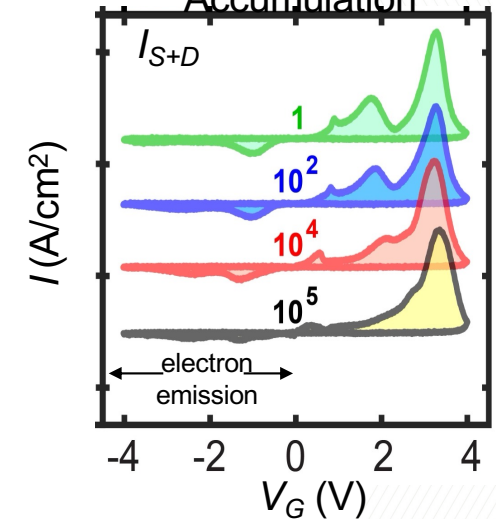
$I_D - V_G$:



$P - V_G$:

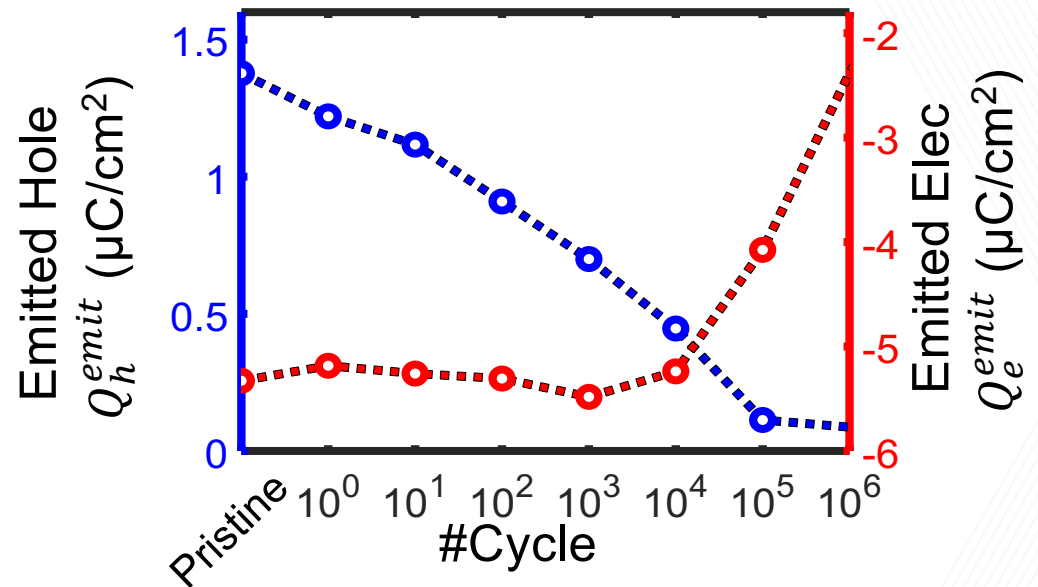
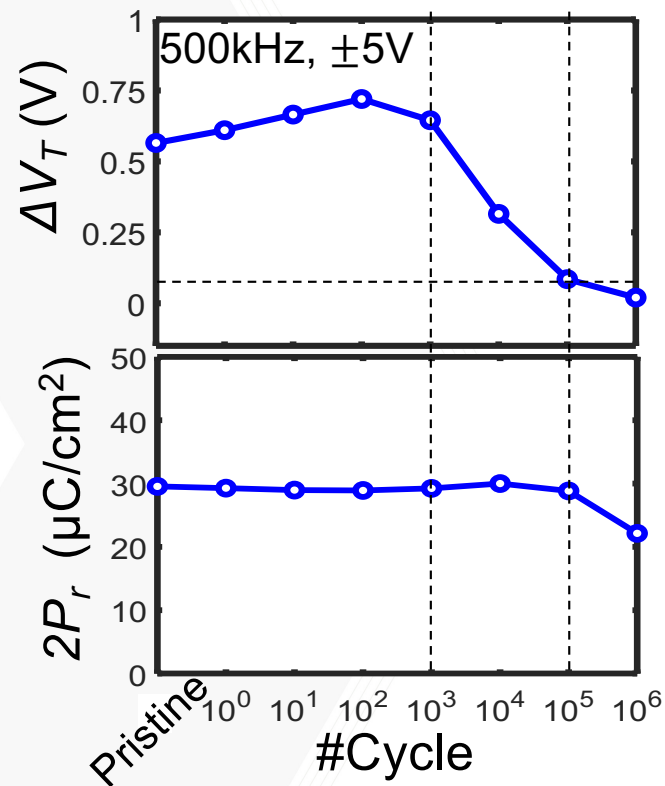


Electron Emission
During Hole
Accumulation



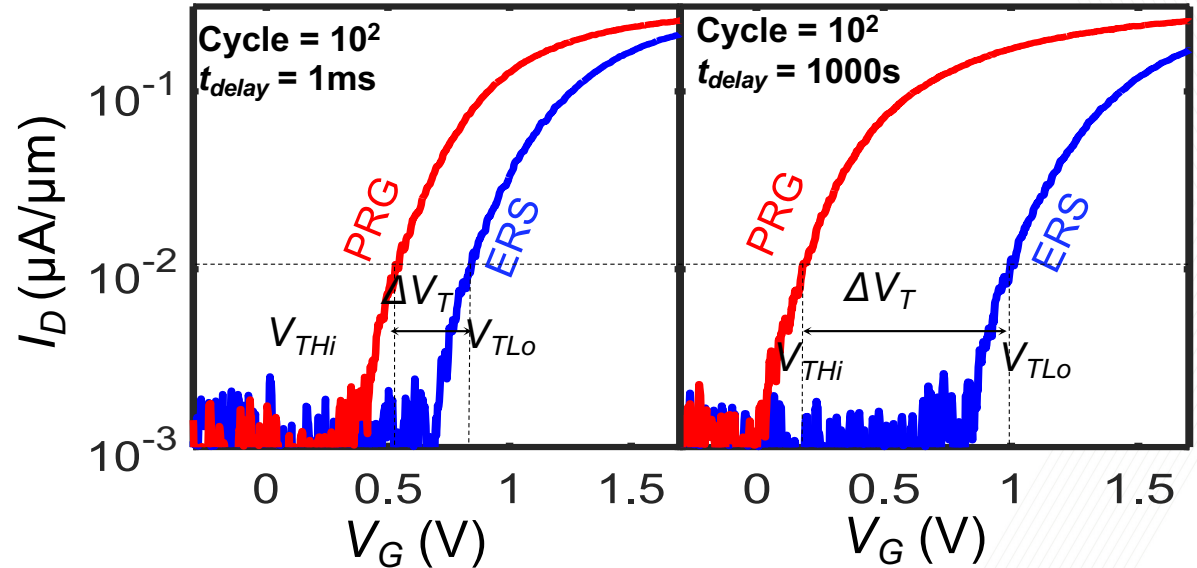
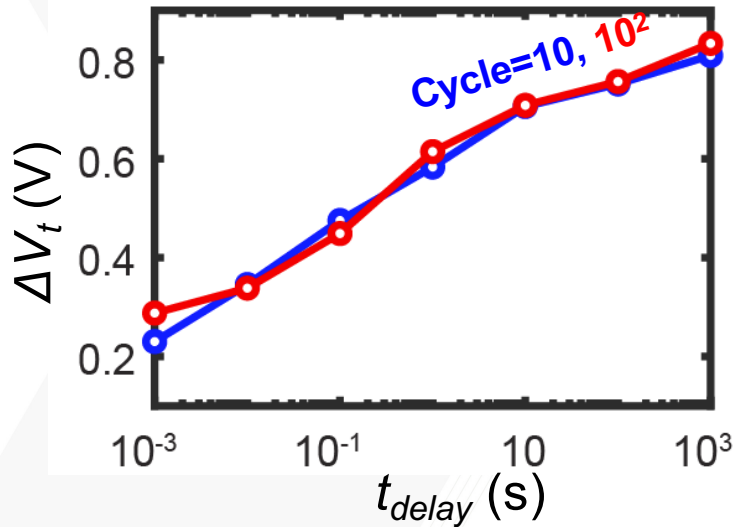
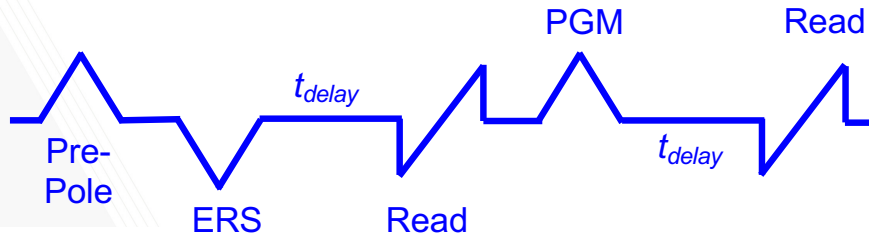
- $2P_r$ does not change with cycling.
- Electron and hole emission changes with cycling

Trap Emission with Fatigue Cycling



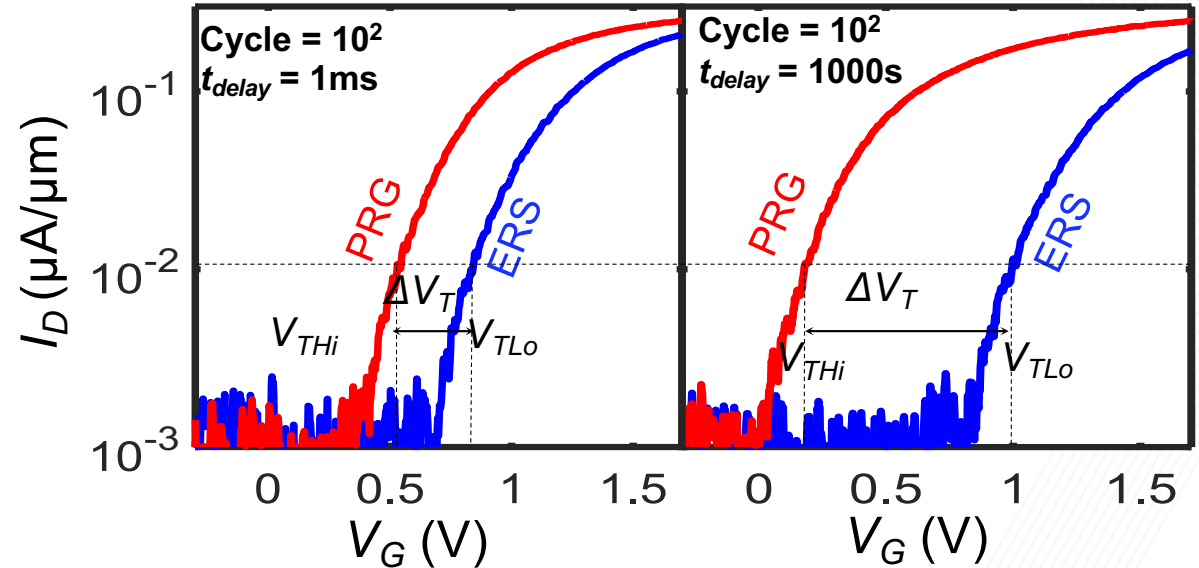
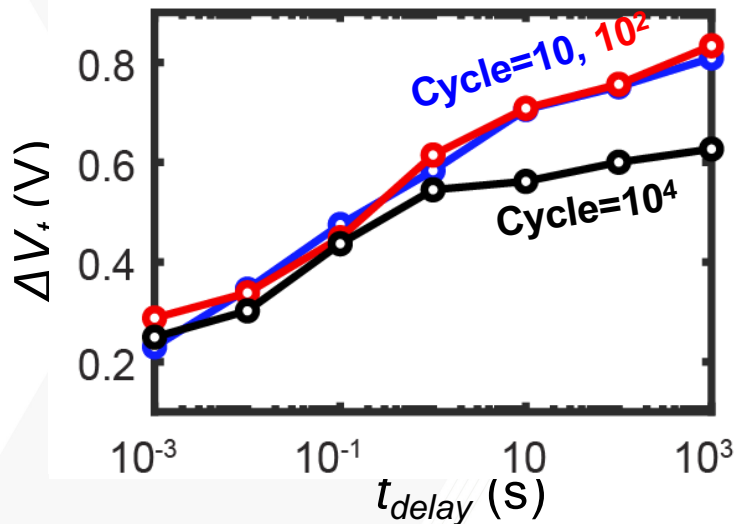
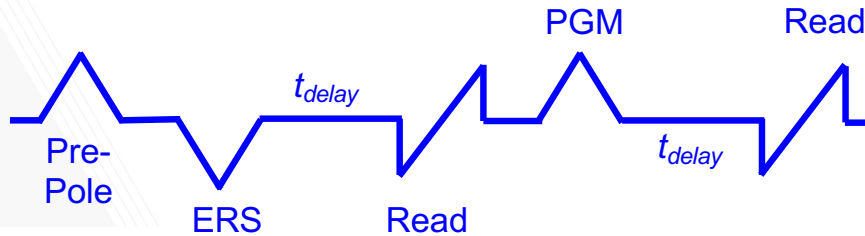
$10^8/cm^2$ holes get “permanently” trapped per cycle.

Delay with Cycling



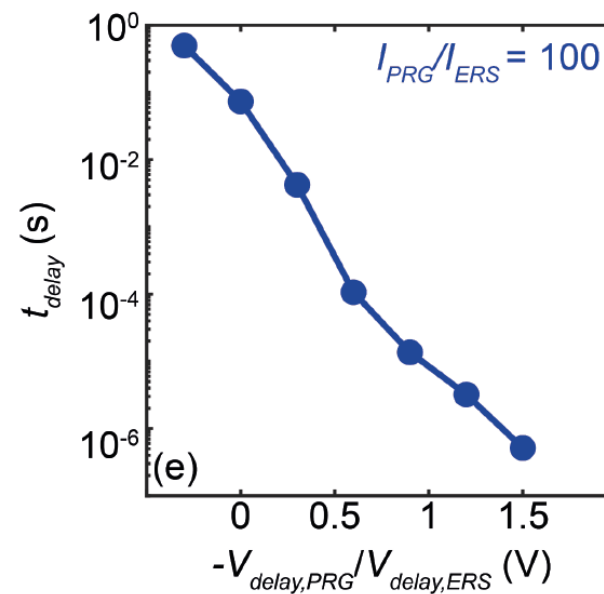
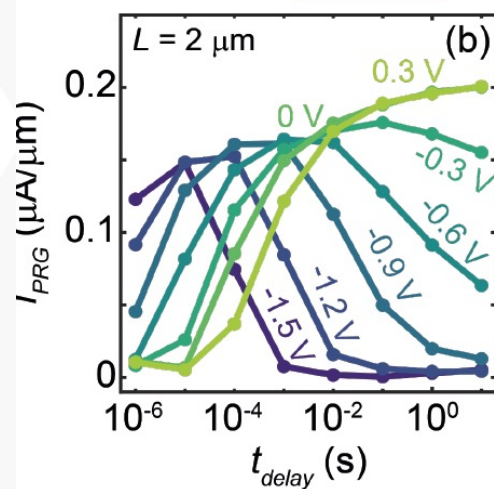
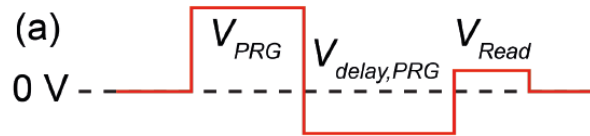
Tasneem et al. Trap Capture and Emission Dynamics in Ferroelectric Field-Effect Transistors and their Impact on Device Operation and Reliability, IEDM 2011.

Delay with Cycling



Change in MW recovery rate in fatigues devices indicate trapping in states with larger lifetimes.

Stand-by bias improvement in Read-After-Write Delay

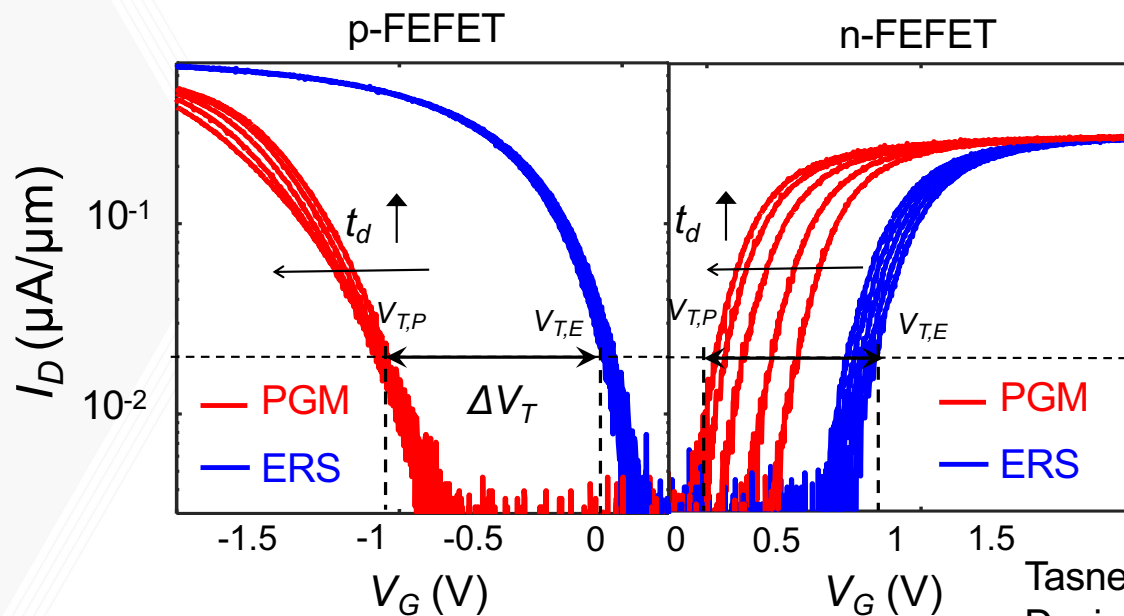
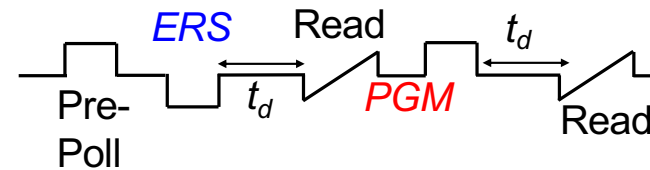
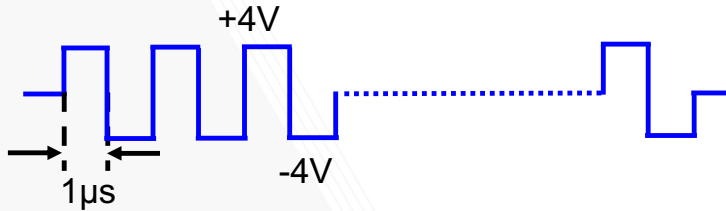


Stand-by bias enables fast neutralization of trapped charges and hence allows for faster read and better endurance.

Wang et al. Stand-by bias improvement in read-after-write delay in ferroelectric field-effect transistors, IEDM 2011.

Wang et al. Standby Bias Improves the Endurance in Ferroelectric Field Effect Transistors due to Fast Neutralization of Interface Traps, VLSI TSA 2011.

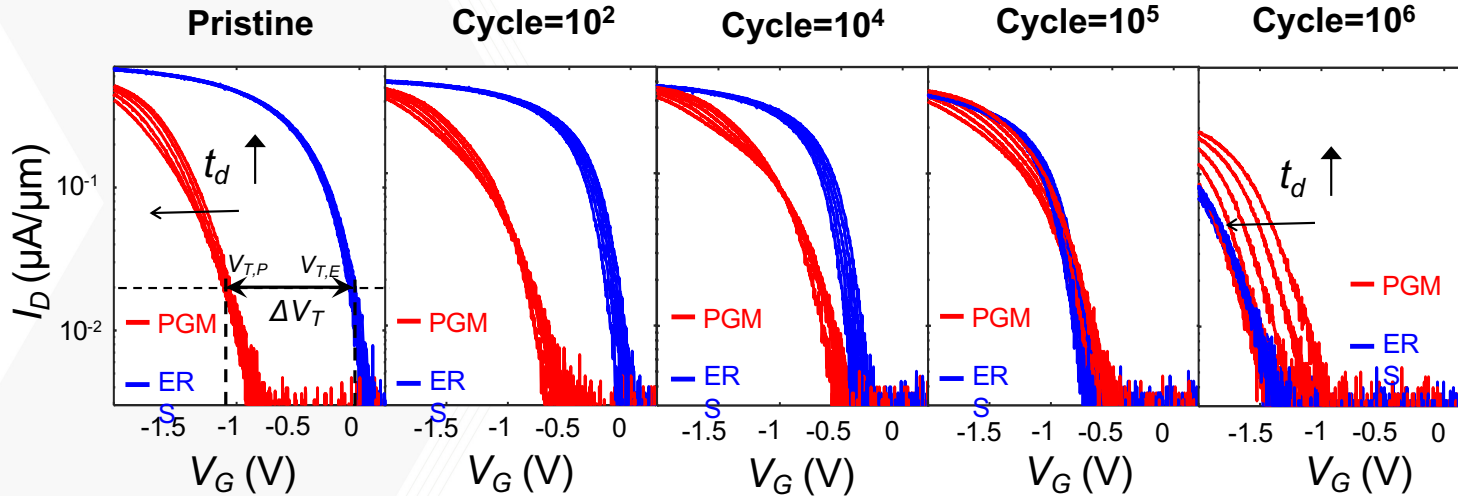
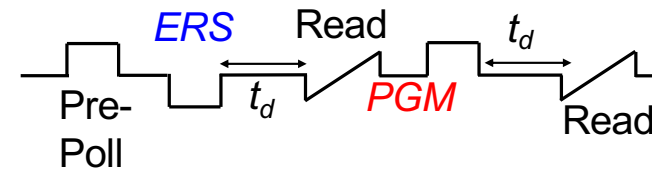
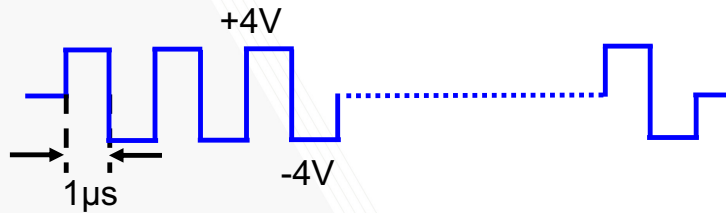
Read after Write Delay in p- vs n-type FEFETs



Tasneem et al. IEEE T Materials and Device Reliability (under review).

Immediate read after write capability in p-FEFETs

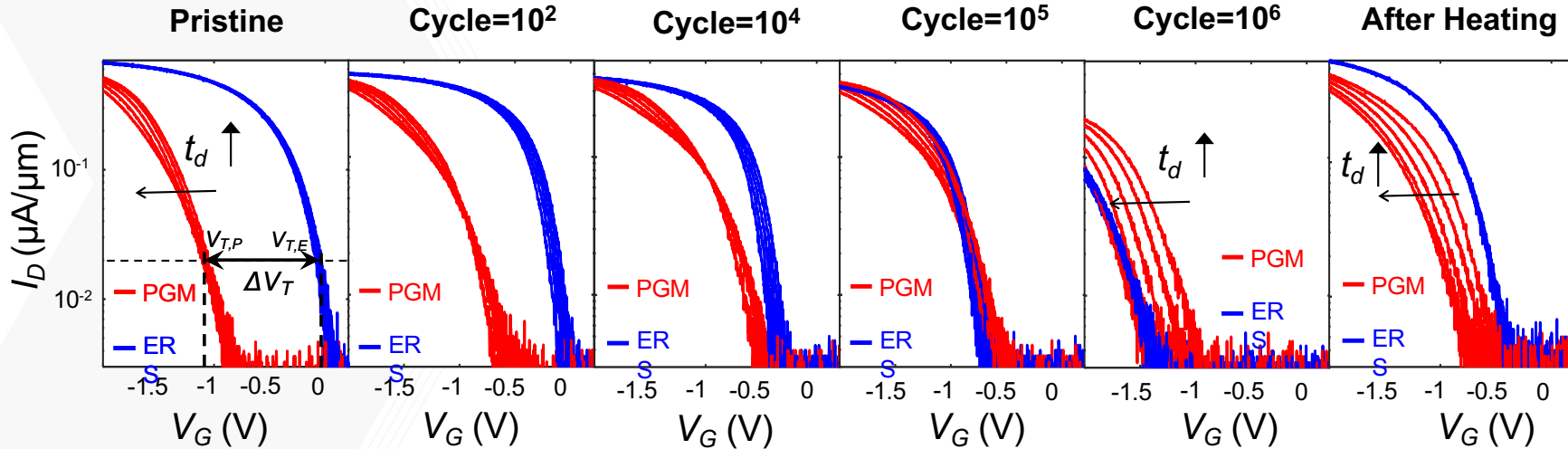
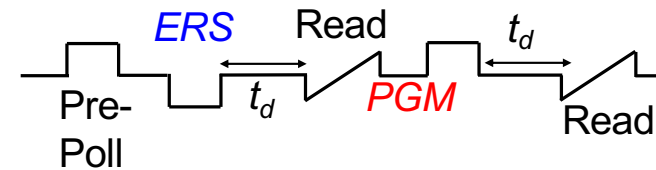
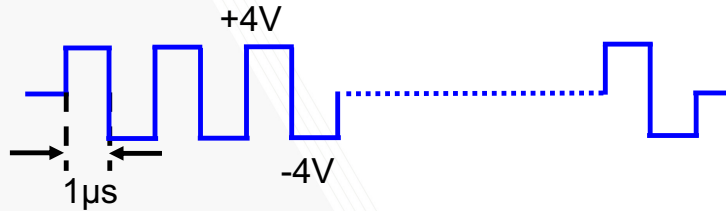
Read after Write Delay in p-FEFETs with cycling



Tasneem et al. IEEE T Materials and Device Reliability (under review).

MW (ΔV_T) is constant with delay until cycle # 10^6

Post-Stress Thermal Treatment



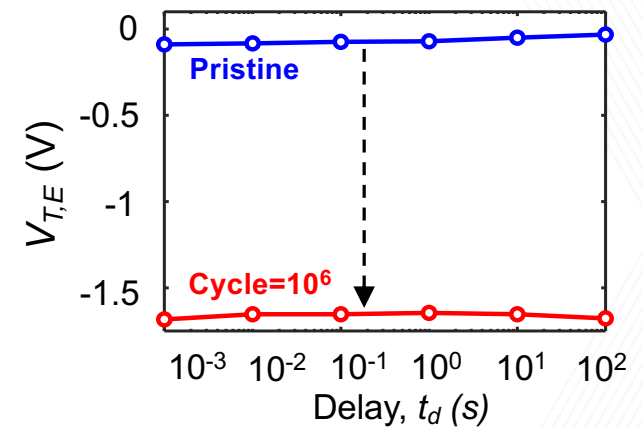
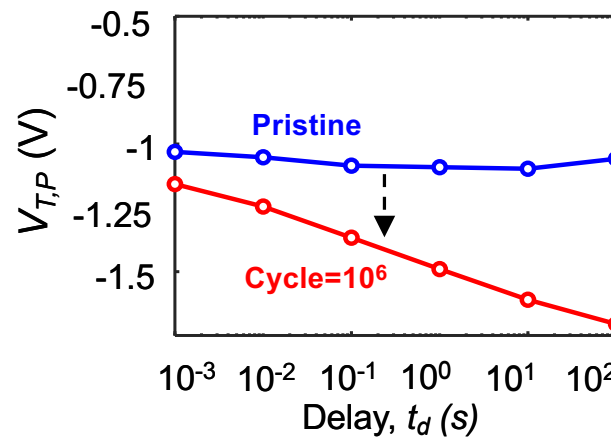
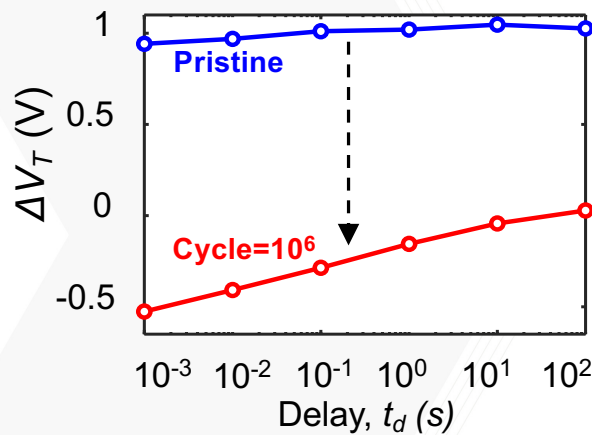
400C, 30min FGA:

- Partially recovers $\sim 50\%$ of pre-stress ΔV_T
- Retains post-stress, pre-treatment ΔV_T recovery characteristics

Tasneem et al. IEEE T Materials and Device Reliability (under review).

Read after Write Delay in p-FEFETs

Post-Stress Thermal Treatment

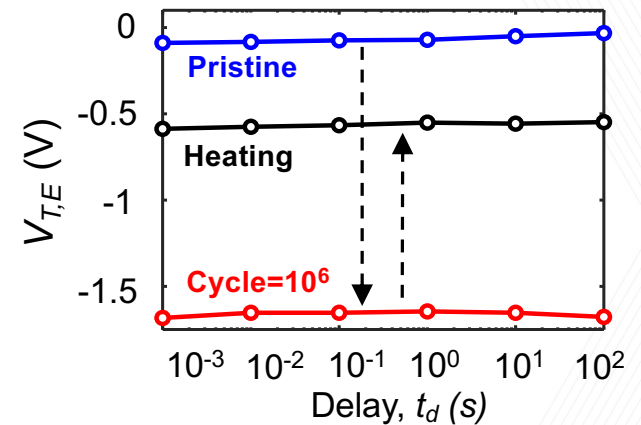
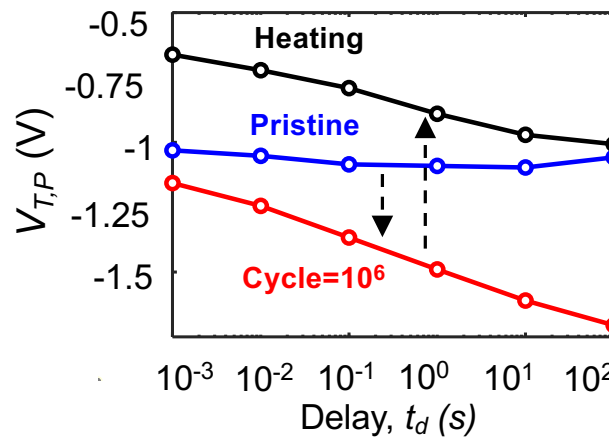
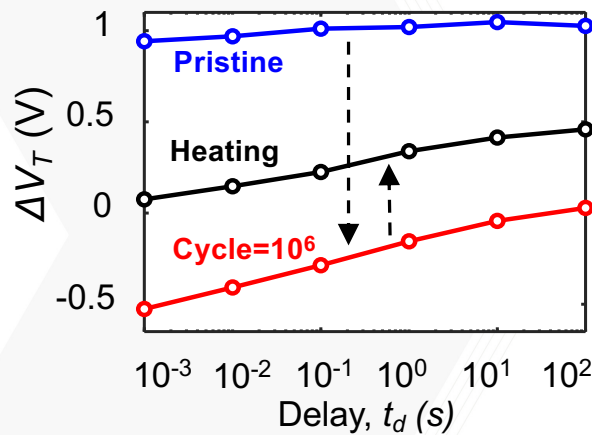


Tasneem et al. IEEE T
Materials and Device
Reliability (under
review).

- After 10^6 cycles: MW shows significant dependence on t_d

Read after Write Delay in p-FEFETs

Post-Stress Thermal Treatment



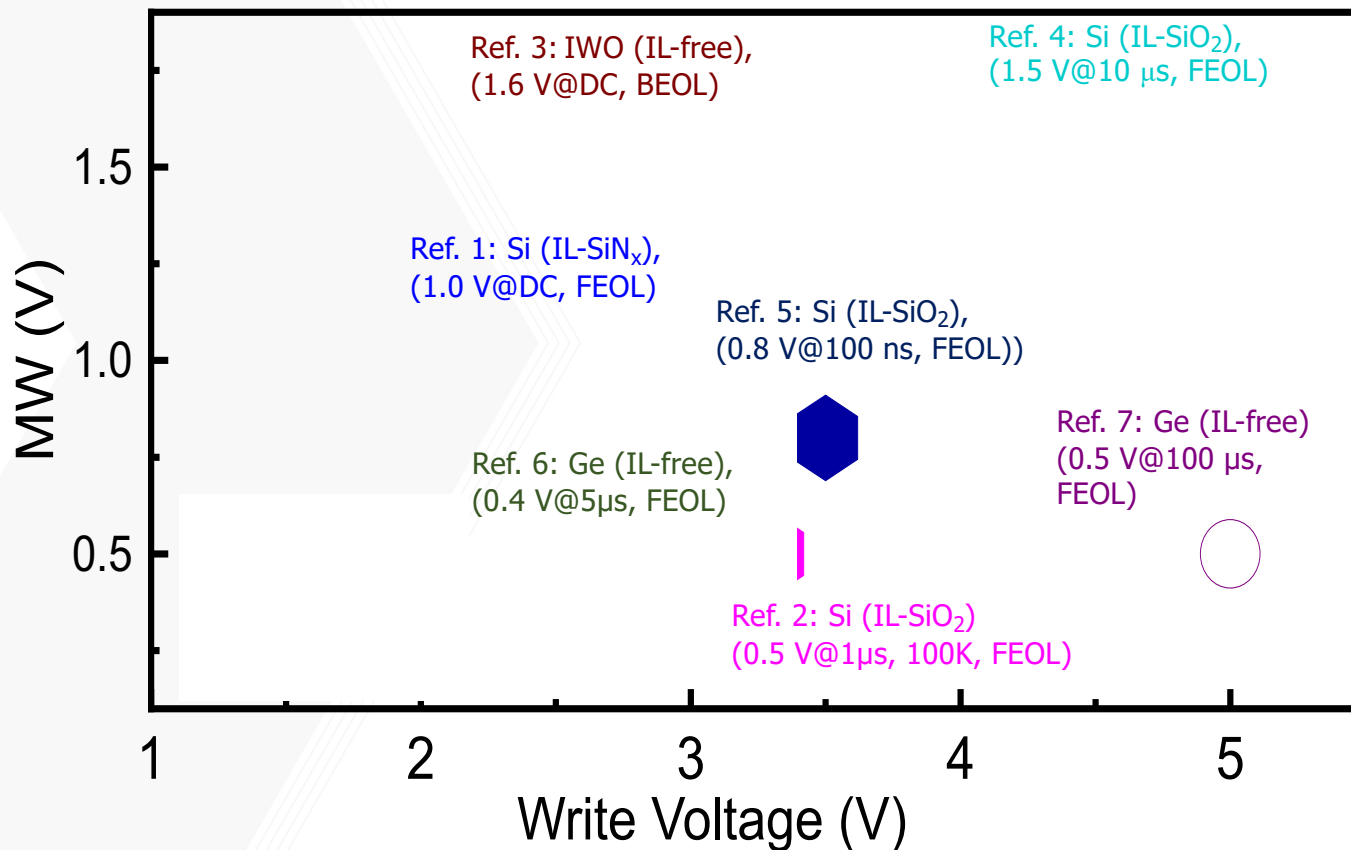
Tasneem et al. IEEE T
Materials and Device
Reliability (under
review).

Slope of the curve (*MW recovery rate*) after the thermal treatment remains the same as that of 10^6 cycle

Take-away #3

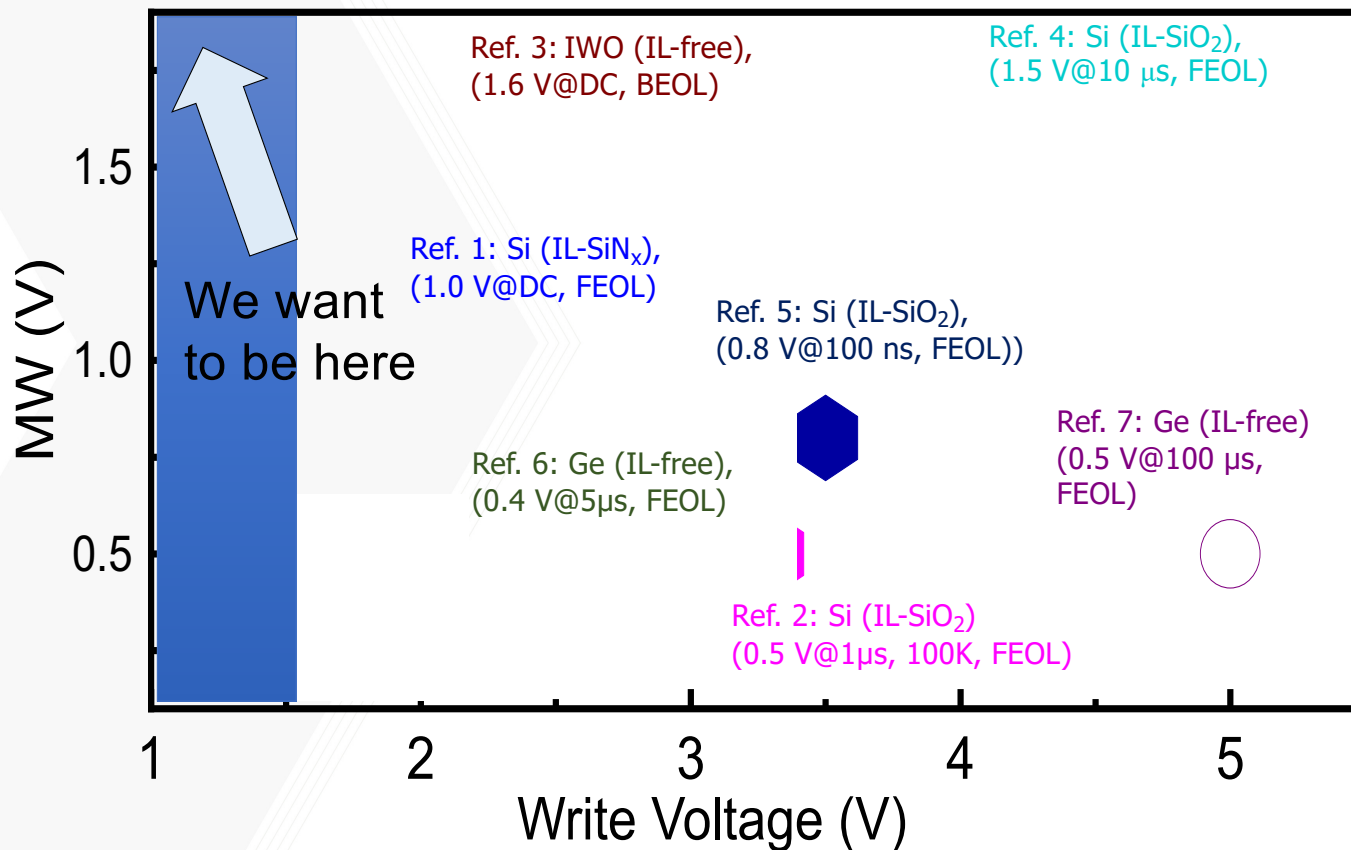
Different types of traps are responsible for different performance degradation mechanism!

Benchmarking Memory Window v. Write Voltage Tradeoff



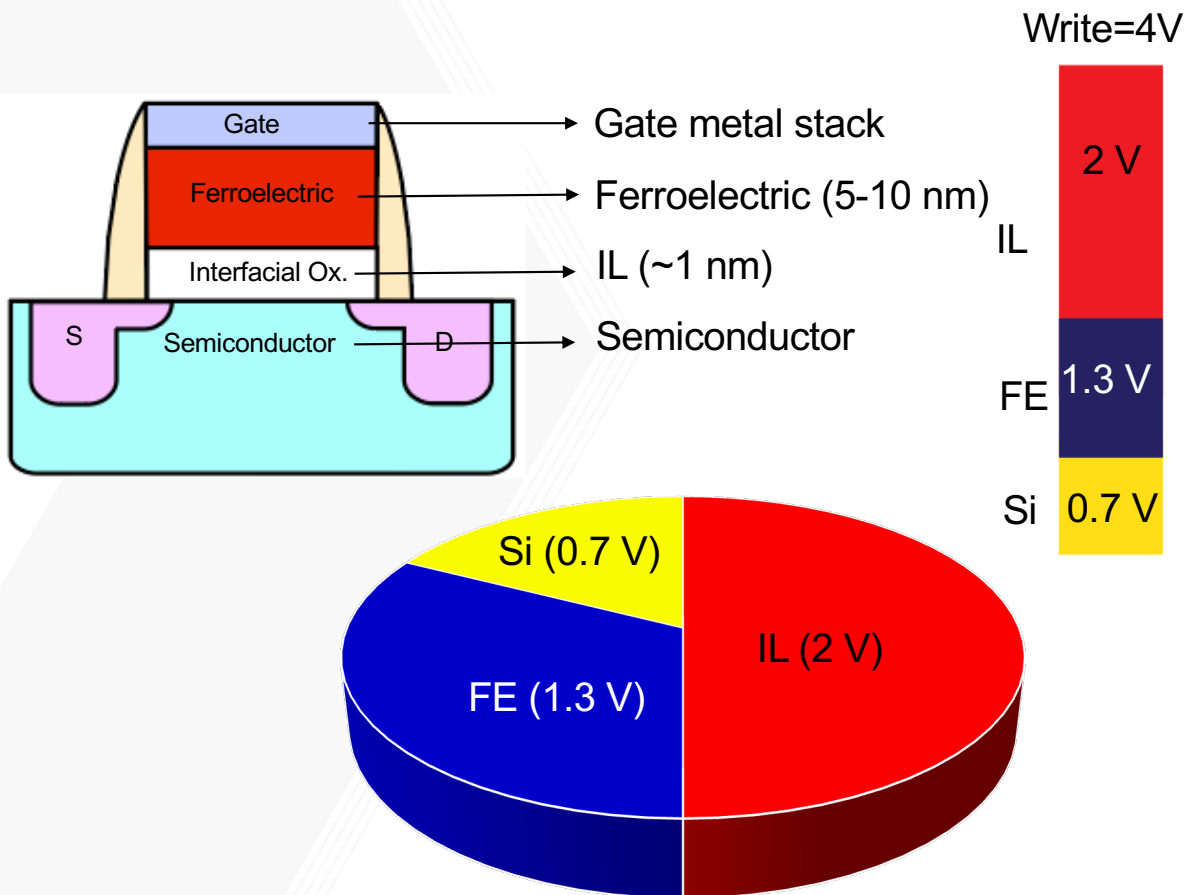
- [1] Tan *et al.*, *IEEE EDL*, 42, 994, (2021).
- [2] Tan *et al.*, *2020 IEEE Symposium on VLSI Technology* (2020).
- [3] Dutta *et al.*, *IEEE EDL*, 43, 382 (2022).
- [4] Dünkler *et al.*, *IEDM* (2017).
- [5] Nguyen *et al.*, *IEEE EDL*, 42, 1295, (2021).
- [6] Liu *et al.*, *IEEE EDL*, 40, 1419, (2019).
- [7] Zacharaki *et al.*, *ACS Appl. Electron. Mater.*, 4, (2022).

Benchmarking Memory Window v. Write Voltage Tradeoff

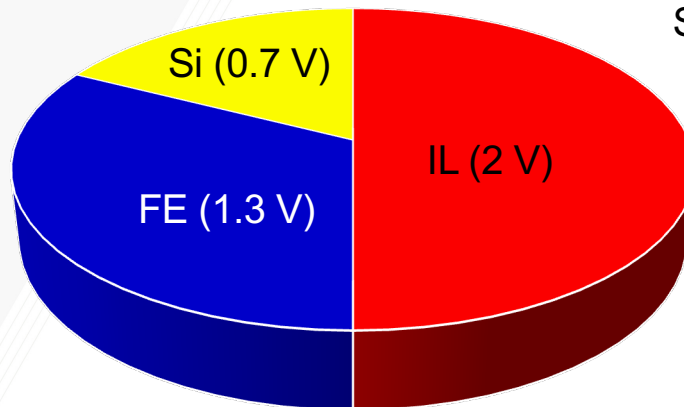
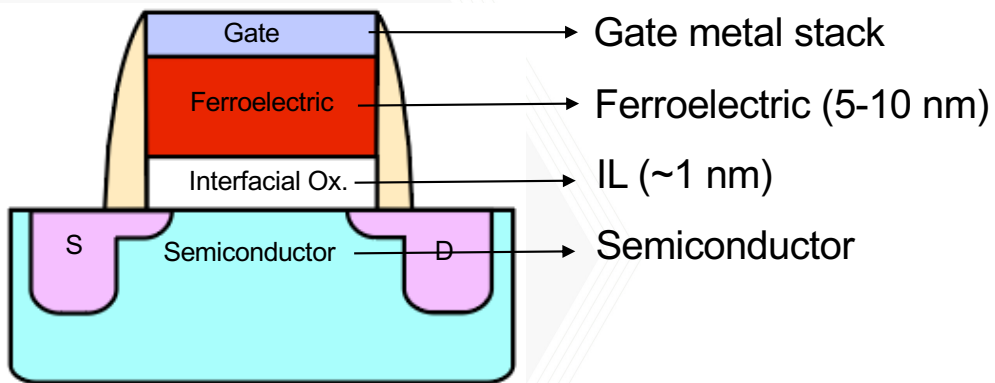


- [1] Tan *et al.*, *IEEE EDL*, 42, 994, (2021).
- [2] Tan *et al.*, *2020 IEEE Symposium on VLSI Technology* (2020).
- [3] Dutta *et al.*, *IEEE EDL*, 43, 382 (2022).
- [4] D unkel *et al.*, *IEDM* (2017).
- [5] Nguyen *et al.*, *IEEE EDL*, 42, 1295, (2021).
- [6] Liu *et al.*, *IEEE EDL*, 40, 1419, (2019).
- [7] Zacharaki *et al.*, *ACS Appl. Electron. Mater.*, 4, (2022).

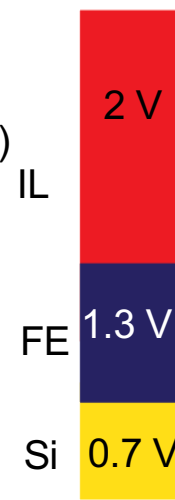
Write voltage vs. memory window trade-off



Write voltage vs. memory window trade-off



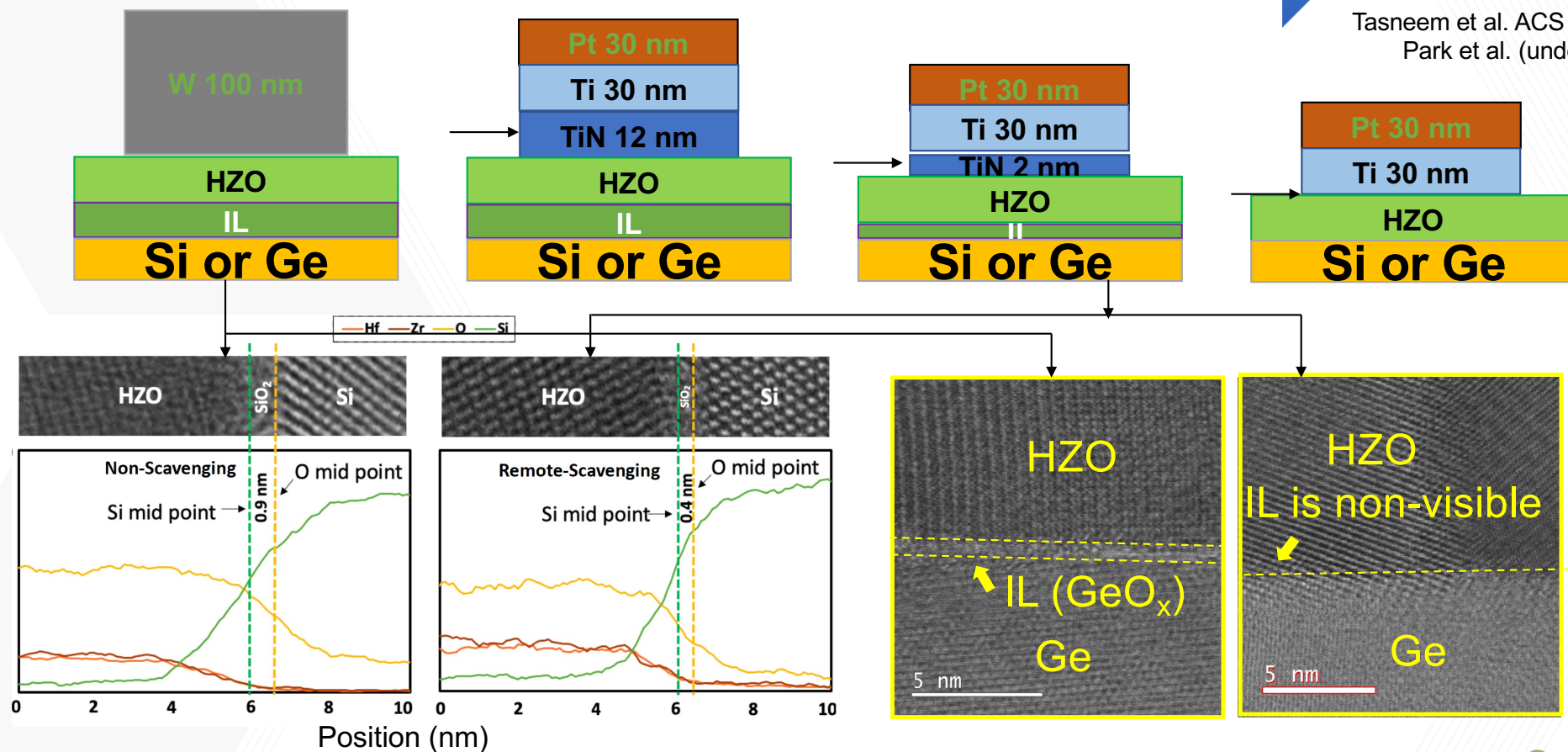
Write=4V



Reducing the thickness of the IL or increasing the K of the IL.
Reliability degradation is a concern.

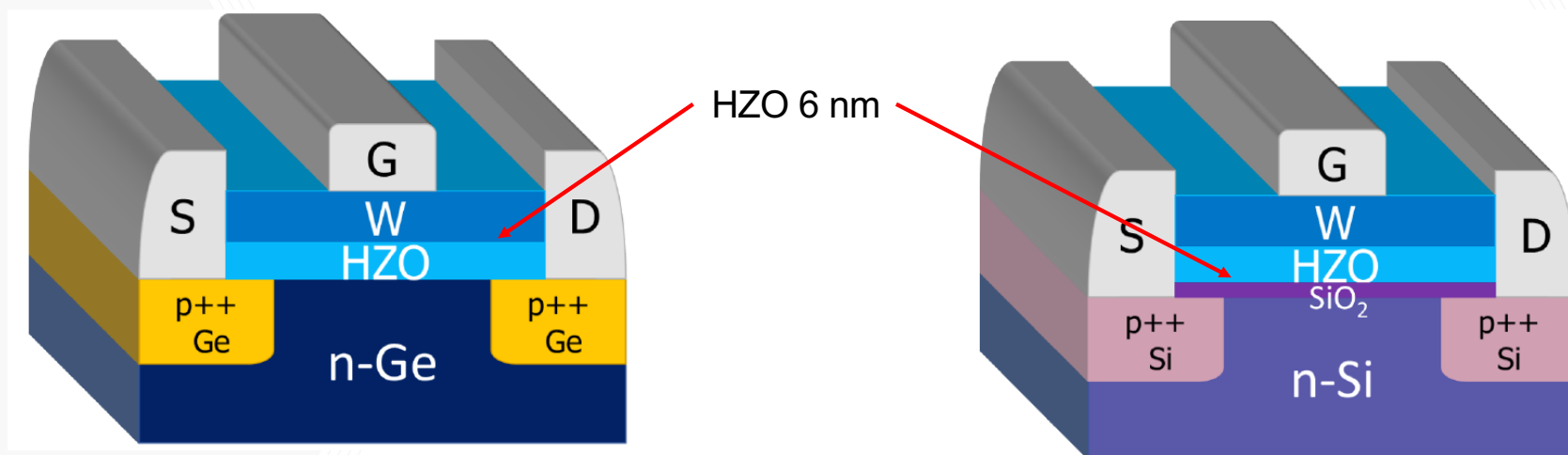
Decrease in IL thickness

Tasneem et al. ACS AMI 2022
Park et al. (under review)



Remote oxygen scavenging can result in controllable IL thickness.

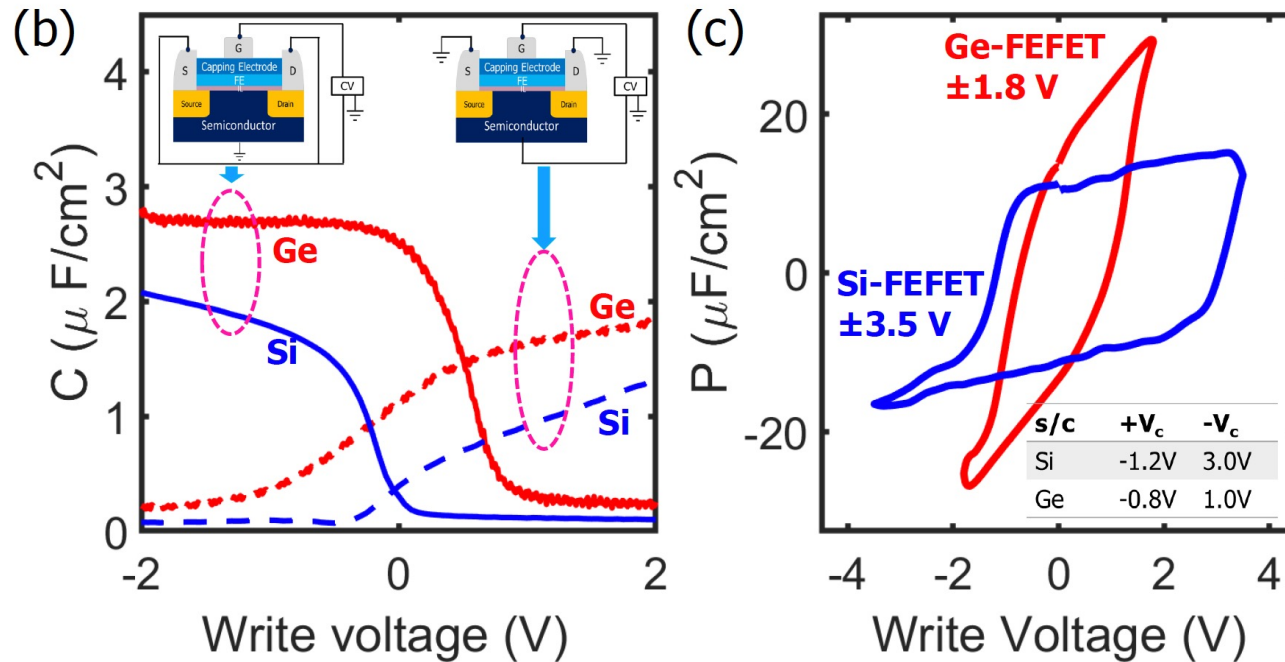
Ge-channel FEFETs with record-low write voltages



Si and Ge-channel FEFETs fabricated with the same 6 nm HZO layers, under similar process and fabrication conditions.

Das et al. A Ge-Channel Ferroelectric Field Effect Transistor with Logic compatible Write Voltage. (under review)

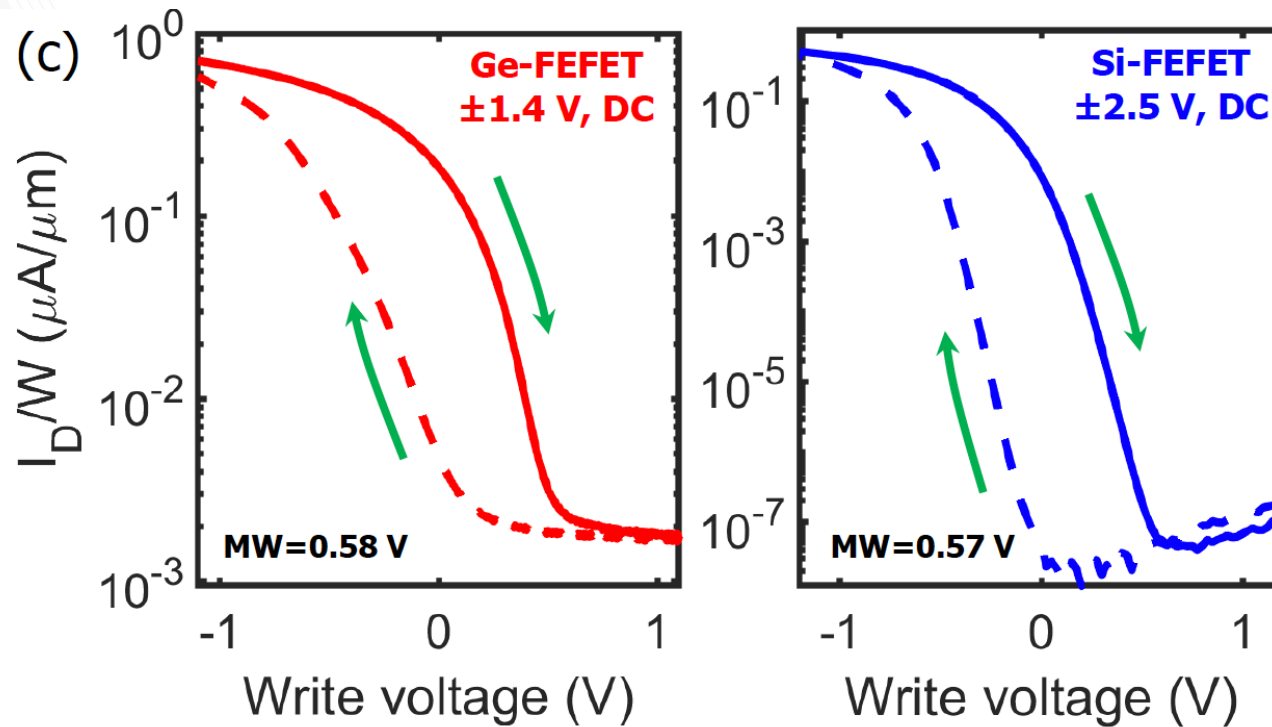
C-V and P-V comparison



Das et al. A Ge-Channel Ferroelectric Field Effect Transistor with Logic compatible Write Voltage. (under review)

Significant increase on the on-capacitance and reduction in coercive voltage in Ge-channel FEFET.

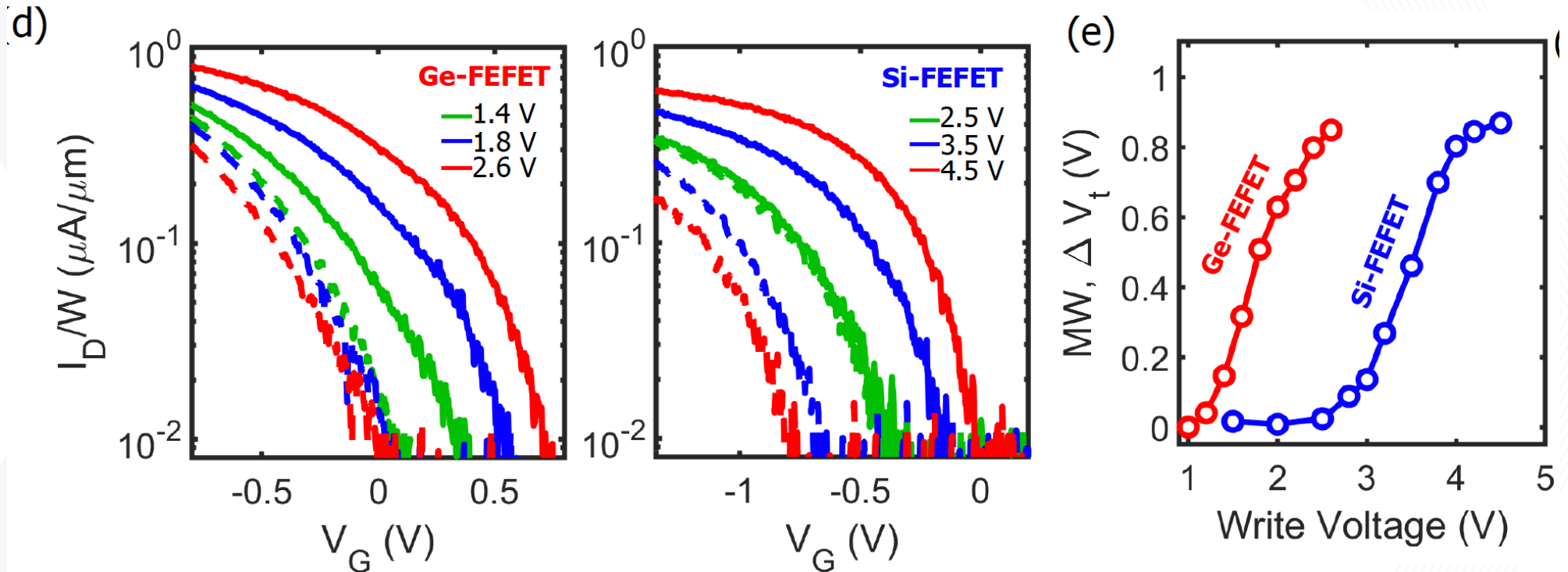
DC I_D - V_G characteristics



Das et al. A Ge-Channel Ferroelectric Field Effect Transistor with Logic compatible Write Voltage. (under review)

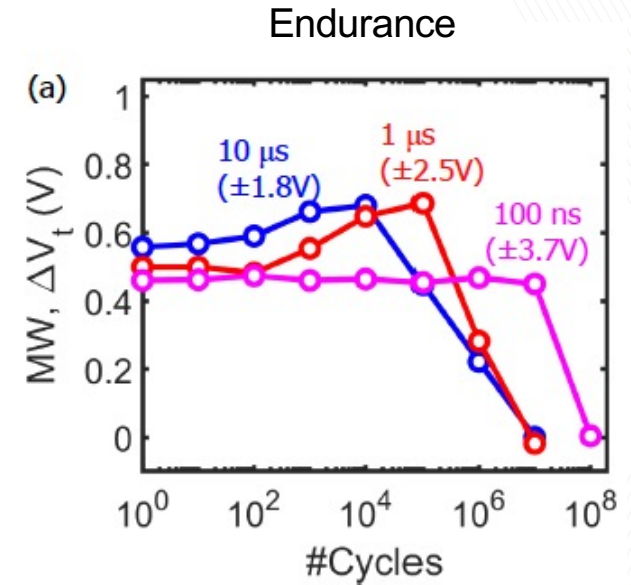
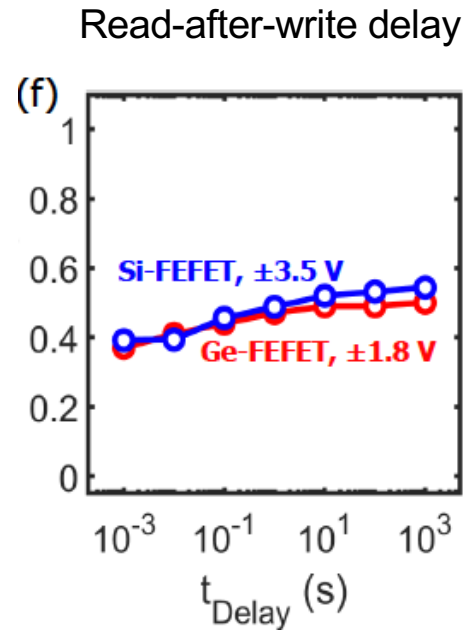
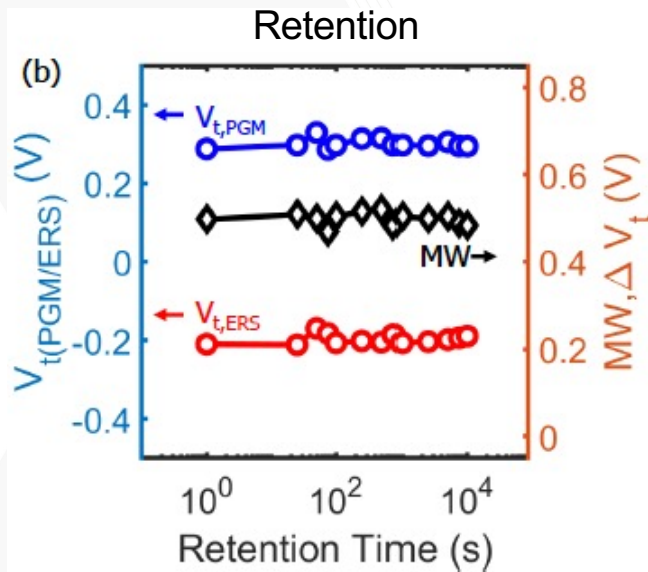
Significant reduction in the write voltage for iso-memory MW condition in Ge-FEFET.

Pulsed I_D - V_G characteristics



Significant reduction in the write voltage for iso-memory MW condition in Ge-FEFET.

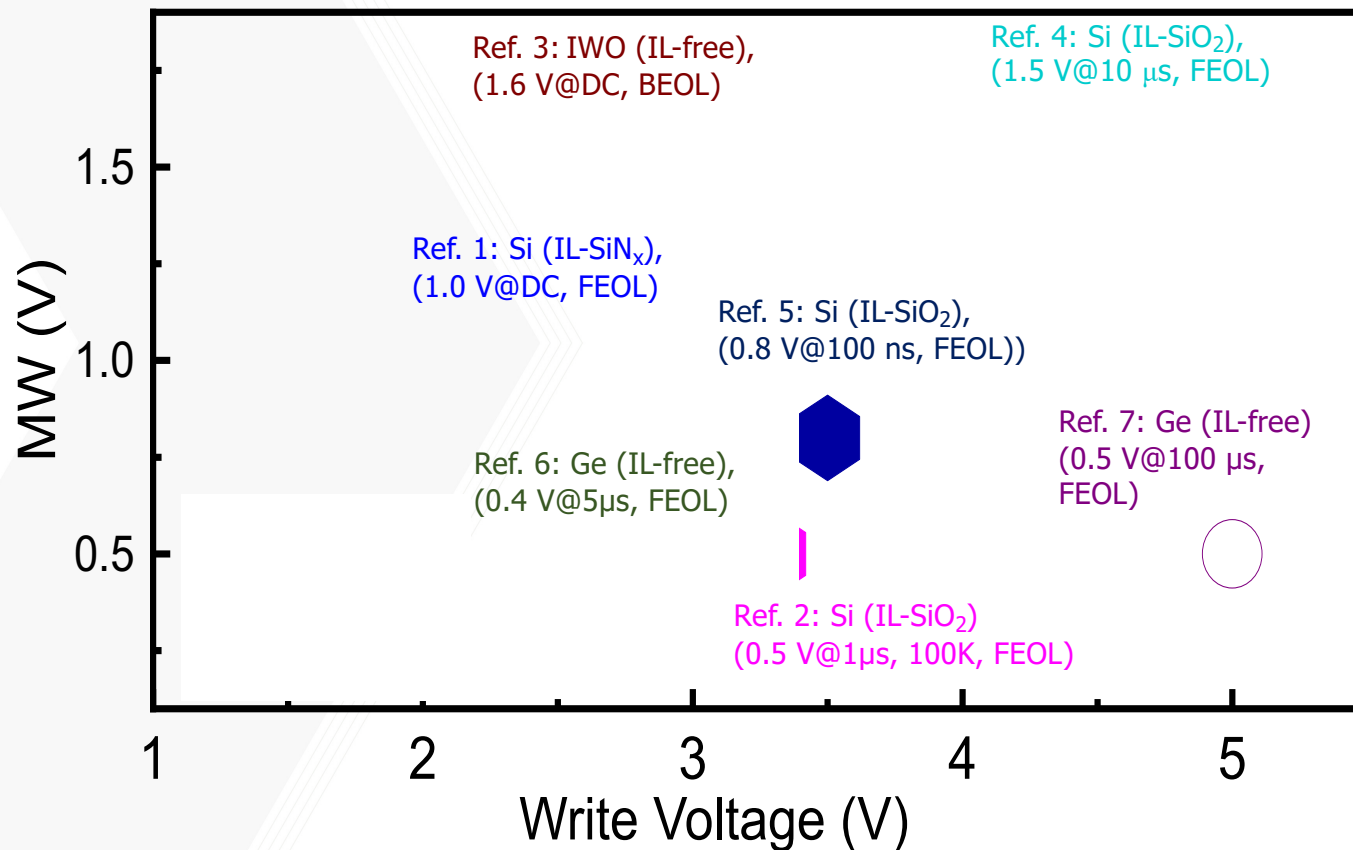
Retention, endurance and read-after-write delay



The Ge-FEFET show write endurance of 10^7 cycles, excellent data retention and immediate read-after-write capability.

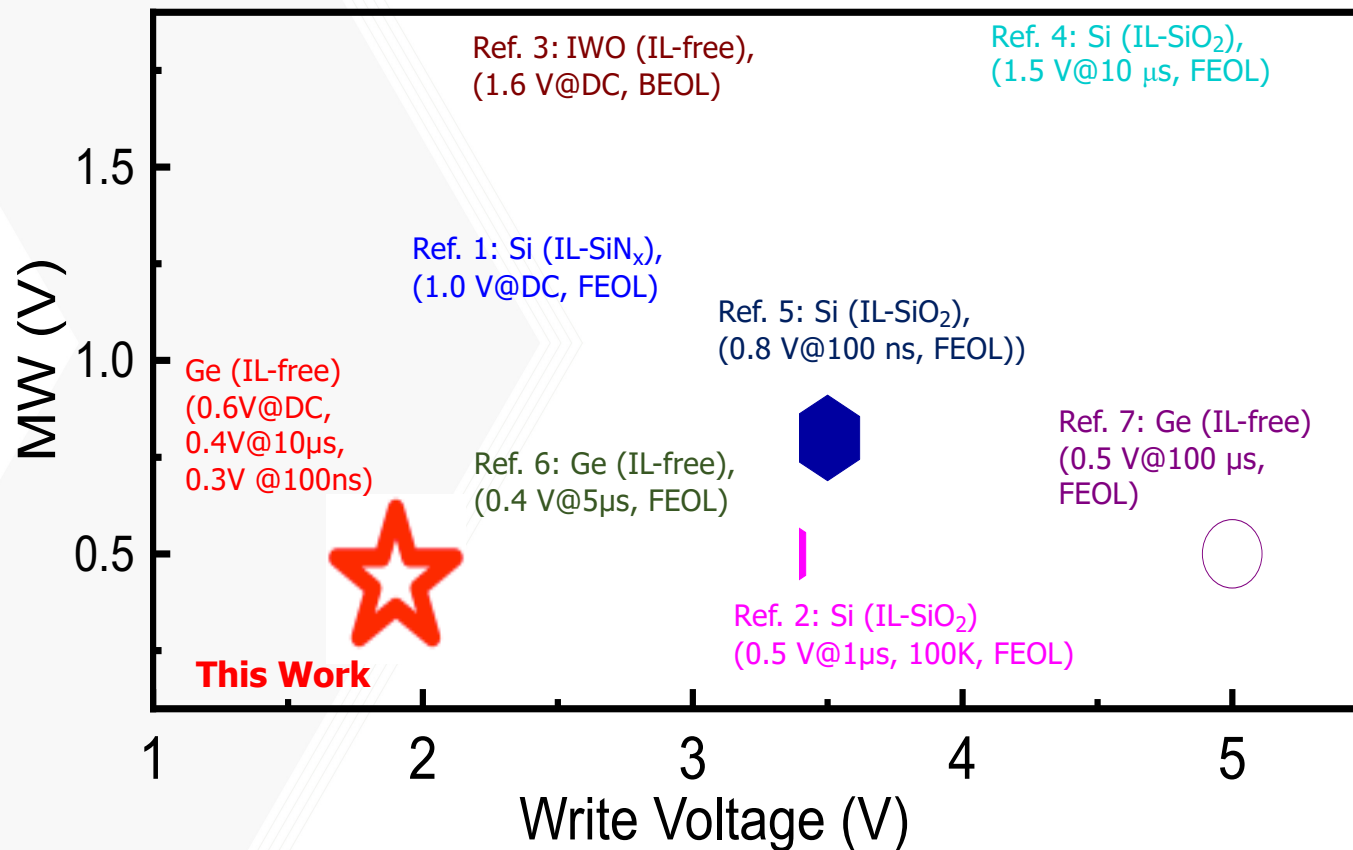
Das et al. A Ge-Channel Ferroelectric Field Effect Transistor with Logic compatible Write Voltage. (under review)

Benchmarking Memory Window v. Write Voltage Tradeoff



- [1] Tan *et al.*, *IEEE EDL*, 42, 994, (2021).
- [2] Tan *et al.*, *2020 IEEE Symposium on VLSI Technology* (2020).
- [3] Dutta *et al.*, *IEEE EDL*, 43, 382 (2022).
- [4] D unkel *et al.*, *IEDM* (2017).
- [5] Nguyen *et al.*, *IEEE EDL*, 42, 1295, (2021).
- [6] Liu *et al.*, *IEEE EDL*, 40, 1419, (2019).
- [7] Zacharaki *et al.*, *ACS Appl. Electron. Mater.*, 4, (2022).

Benchmarking Memory Window v. Write Voltage Tradeoff



- [1] Tan *et al.*, *IEEE EDL*, 42, 994, (2021).
- [2] Tan *et al.*, *2020 IEEE Symposium on VLSI Technology* (2020).
- [3] Dutta *et al.*, *IEEE EDL*, 43, 382 (2022).
- [4] D unkel *et al.*, *IEDM* (2017).
- [5] Nguyen *et al.*, *IEEE EDL*, 42, 1295, (2021).
- [6] Liu *et al.*, *IEEE EDL*, 40, 1419, (2019).
- [7] Zacharaki *et al.*, *ACS Appl. Electron. Mater.*, 4, (2022).

Take-away #4

**There are significant scope for device engineering
for application specific needs!**

Our Team and Sponsors

Our group at Georgia Tech



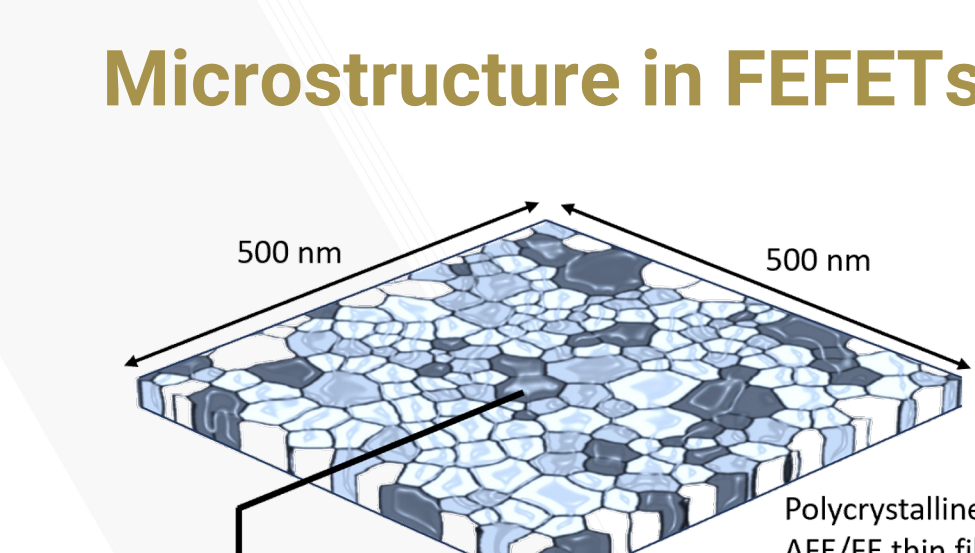
Sponsors



62

62

Microstructure in FEFETs



500 nm

500 nm

Polycrystalline AFE/FE thin film

1. Phase (o-, m-, t-)

3. Sub-grain features (domain walls, interphase boundaries)

2. Grain size & orientation

Device-to-device variability

- Applied field causes changes in microstructure
 - Enables multi-level NVM
 - Poses challenges for (VLSI)

4. Irreversible change of grain structure electric field cycling

Cycle-to-cycle variability

Device-to-device variability

Georgia Tech

CREATING THE NEXT

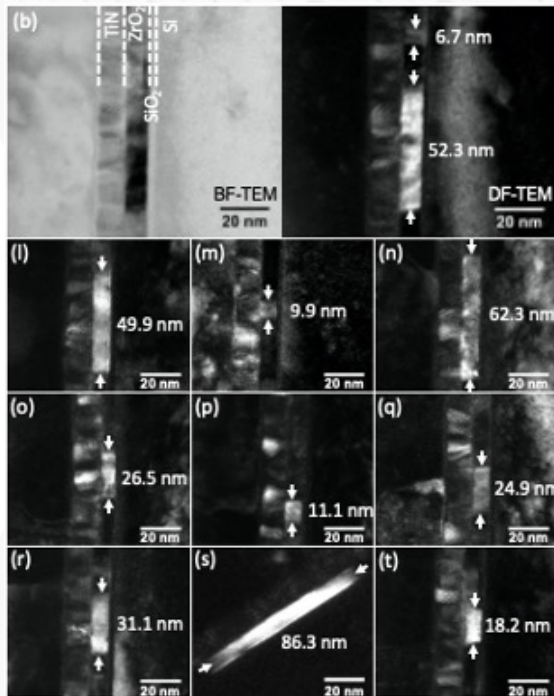
Asif Khan@Georgia Tech

4

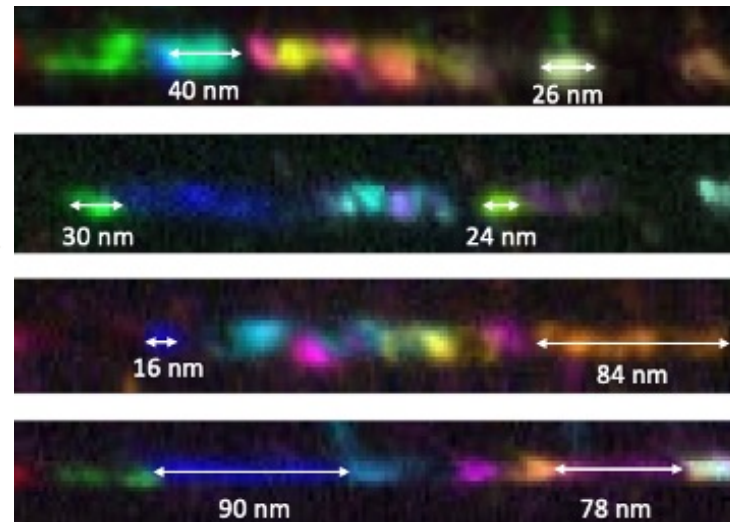
Georgia Tech
CREATING THE NEXT

Quantification of microstructure

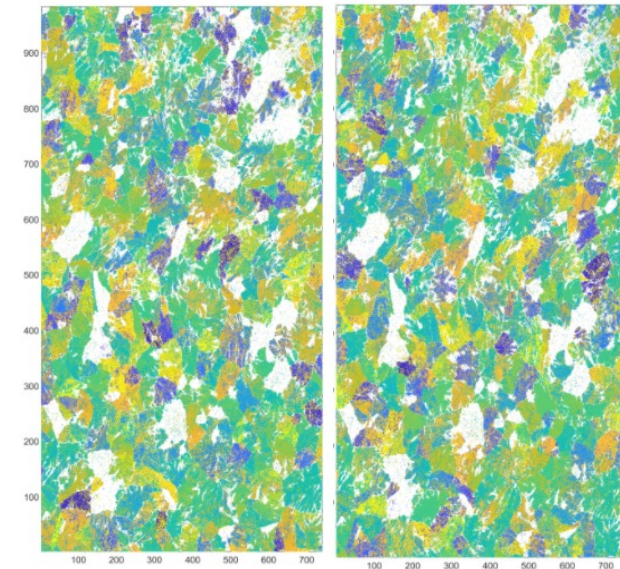
Dark field TEM



Nano-Beam Electron
Diffraction
(NBED)

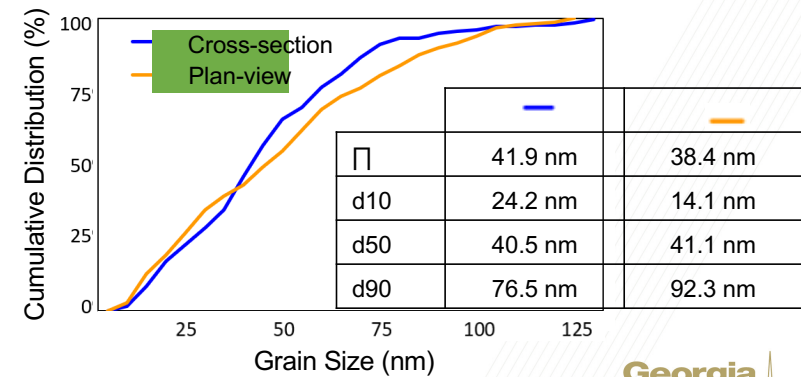
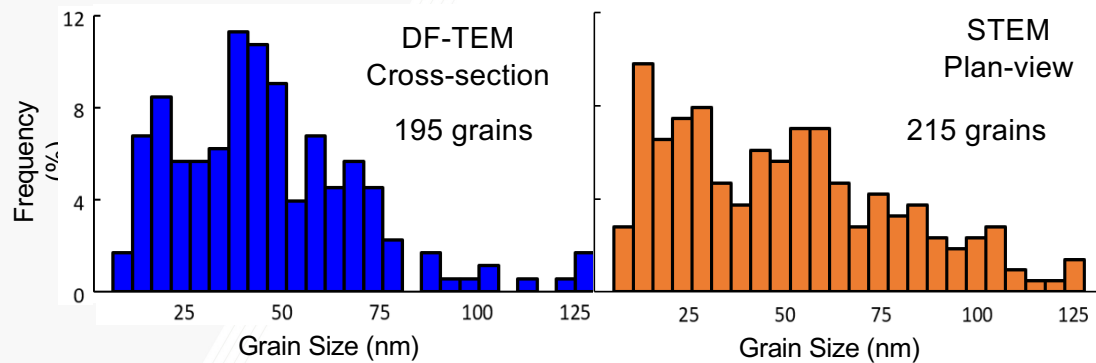
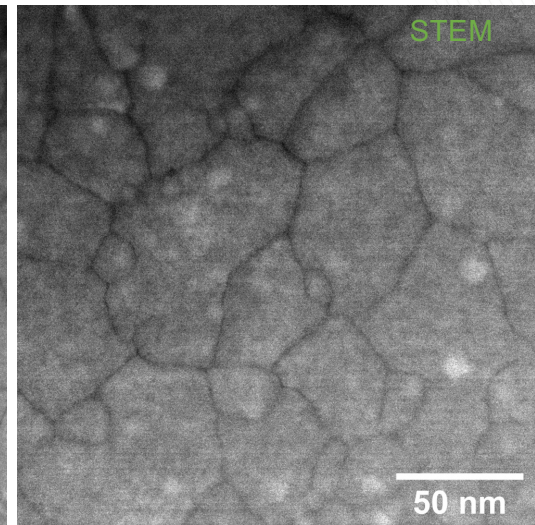
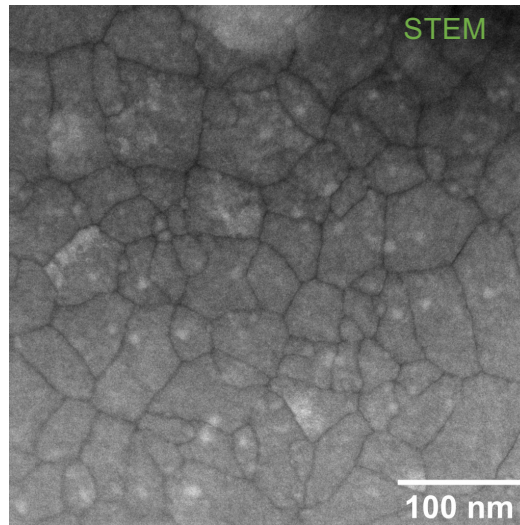
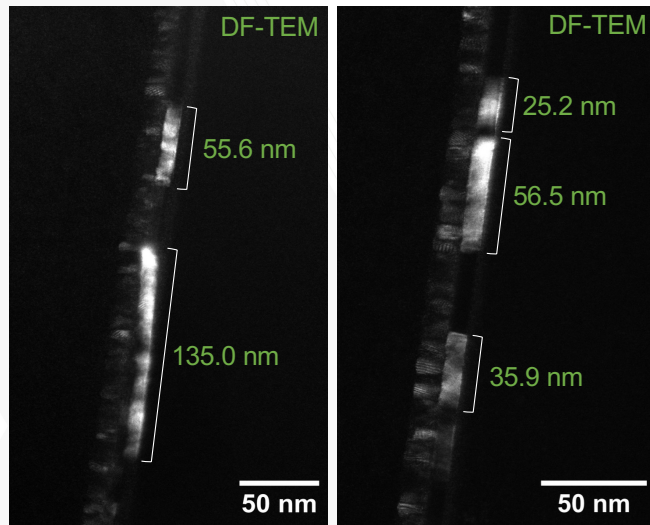


Transmission Kikuchi
Diffraction (TKD)

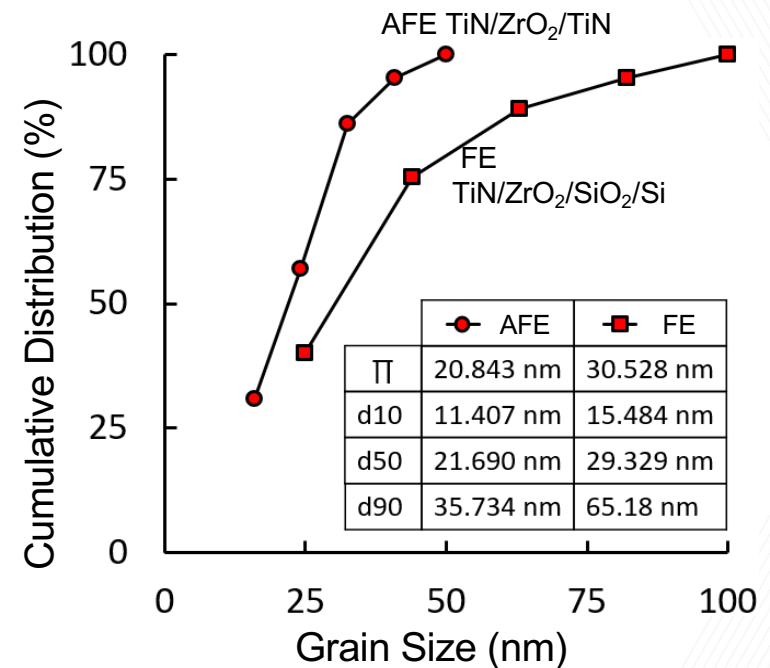
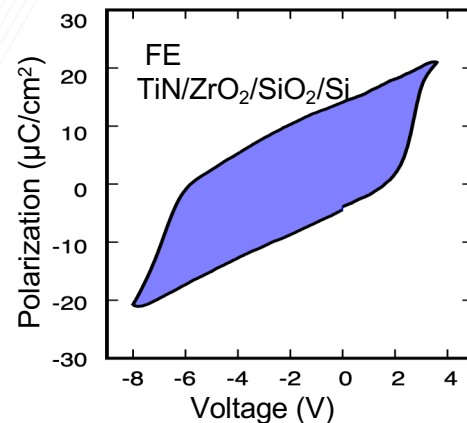
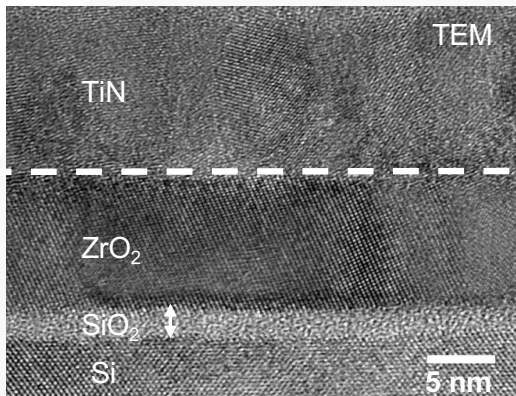
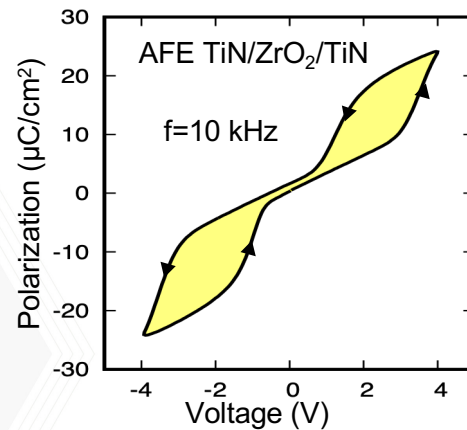
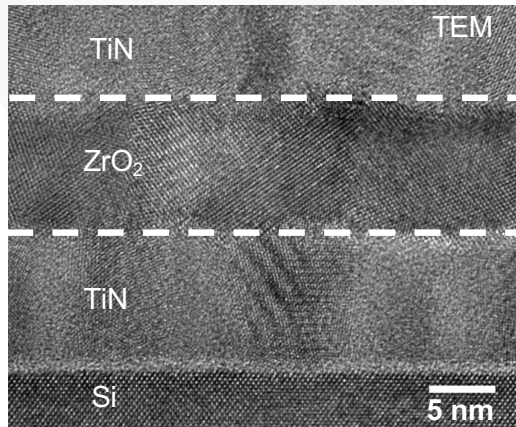


Lombardo, S. F., et al. "Local epitaxial-like templating effects and grain size distribution in atomic layer deposited $\text{HfO}_2 \cdot 5\text{ZrO}_2 \cdot 5\text{O}_2$ thin film ferroelectric capacitors." *Applied Physics Letters* 119.9 (2021): 092901.

Quantification of microstructure



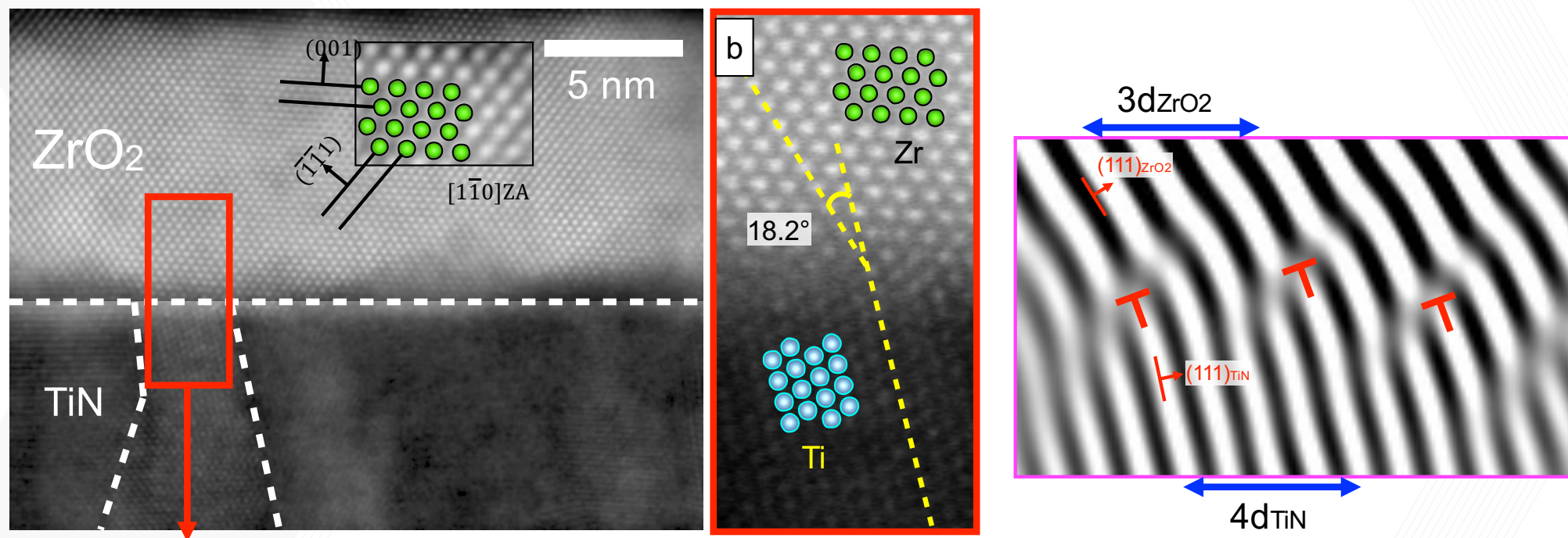
Microstructural origin of AFE and FE in ZrO₂



Smaller grain size favored by Tetragonal phase over FE Orthorhombic phase

Chae* & Lombardo* et al. *ACS Adv. Mat. & Int.*, (2022).

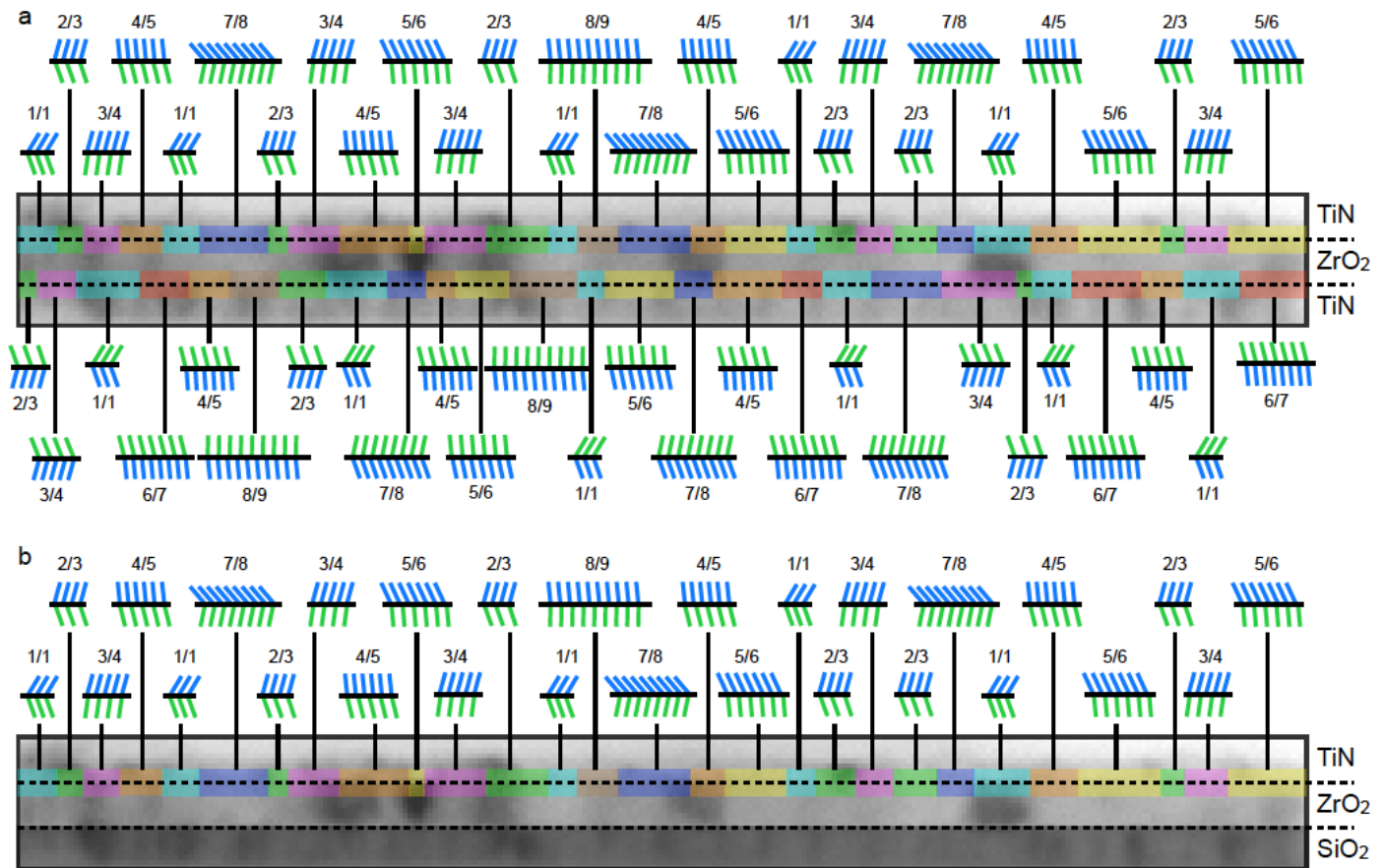
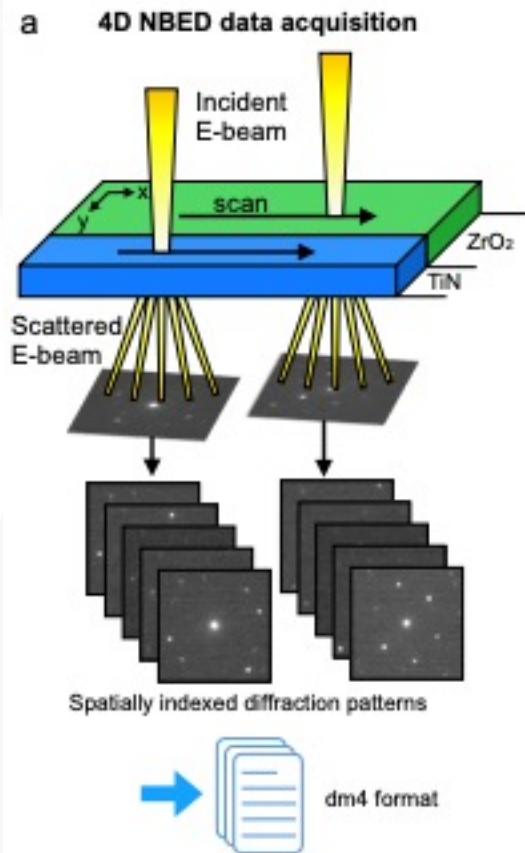
Epitaxial-like templating: Near coincidence site epitaxy



Orientations in TiN and ZrO_2 are often correlated.

Chae* & Lombardo* et al. *ACS Adv. Mat. & Int.*, (2022).

Epitaxial-like templating: Near coincidence site epitaxy

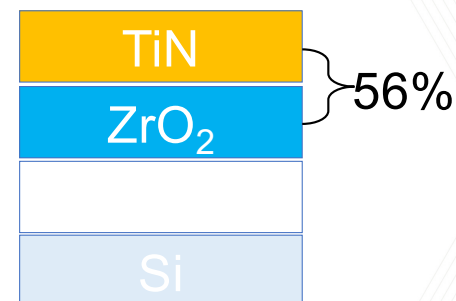
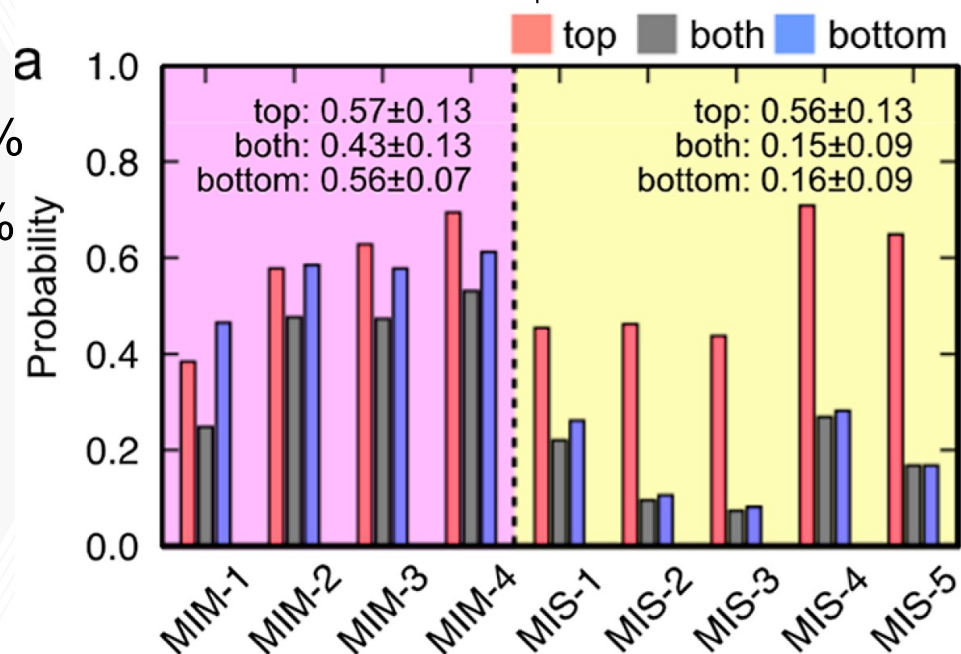
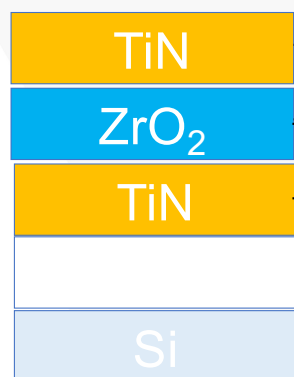


Chae, Lombardo et al. (under review)

Statistical Epitaxy Analysis via Automated NBED

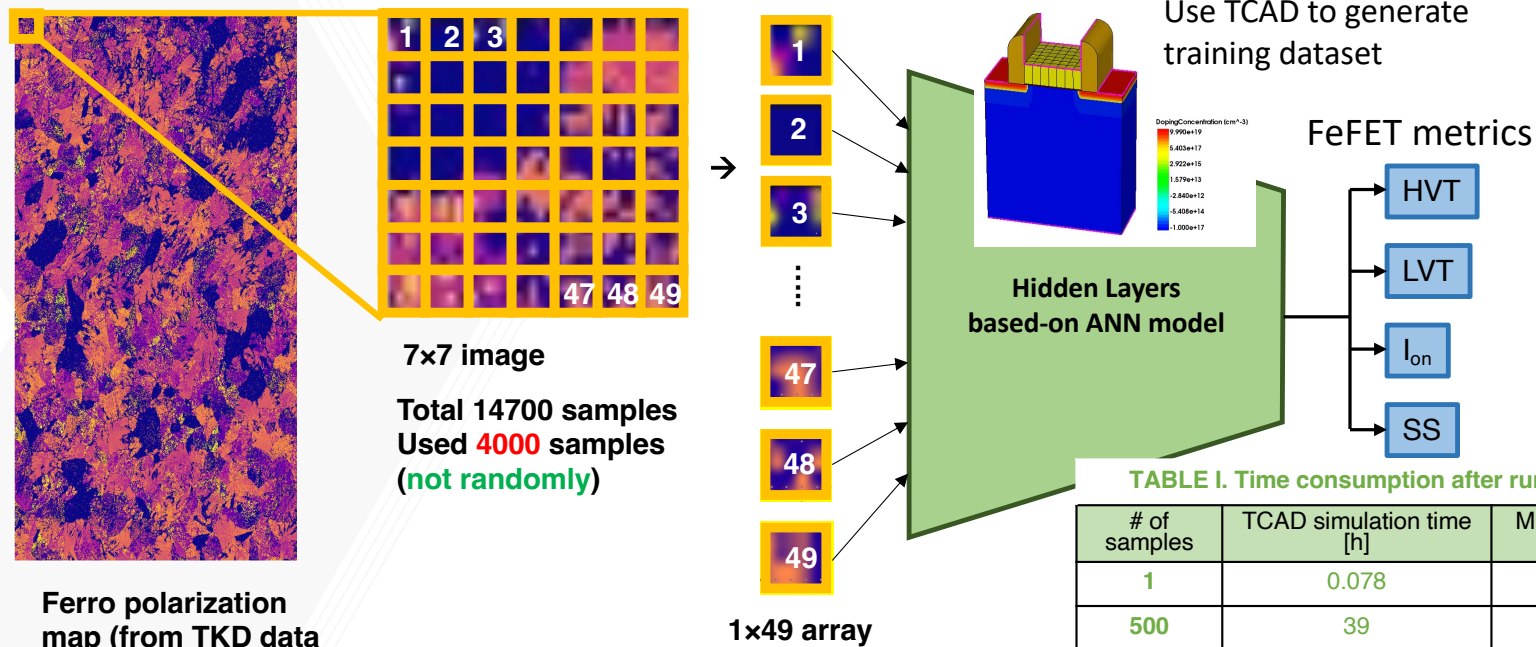
MIM

MOS



Chae* & Lombardo* et al. *ACS Adv. Mat. & Int.*, (2022).

Machine Learning Assisted Predictive TCAD Modeling (from Metrology to Device Metrics)



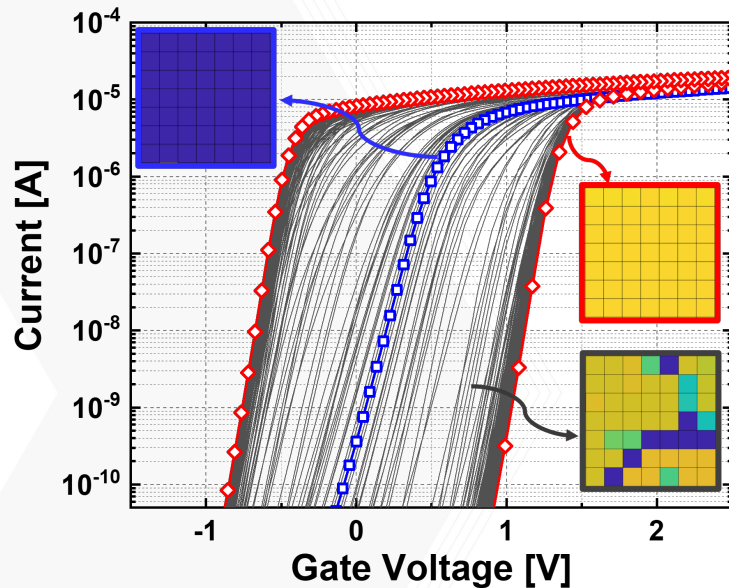
Significant speed up (ML vs. TCAD)

TABLE I. Time consumption after running test samples

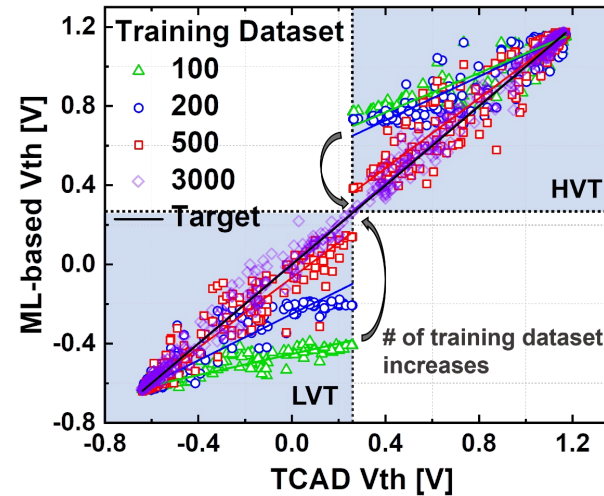
# of samples	TCAD simulation time [h]	ML-based inference time [h]
1	0.078	5e-8
500	39	2.5e-5
1,000	78	5.3e-5
2,000	156	1.07e-4
10,000	780	5.3e-4
14,700	1146.6 (=48 days)	7.79e-4 (=2.8 secs)

G. Choe, et al, VLSI 2022

ML assisted Device Variation Modeling



G. Choe, P. V. Ravindran, A. Lu, J. Hur, M. Lederer, A. Reck, S. Lombardo, N. Afroze, J. Kacher, A. I. Khan, S. Yu, "Machine learning assisted statistical variation analysis of ferroelectric transistors: from experimental metrology to predictive modeling," IEEE Symposium on VLSI Technology and Circuits (VLSI) 2022



TCAD results vs. ML-based results of HVT/LVT. Symbols represent the data points and lines are linearly fitted trend lines.

TABLE II. Average, 3-sigma and percentage of prediction error

	TCAD	ML-based prediction		
	μ	μ	3σ	Error
HVT [V]	1.05	1.05	0.08	1.2%
LVT [V]	-0.53	-0.53	0.07	2.0%
I_{on} [μA]	6.68	6.68	1.01	2.1%
SS [mV/dec]	94.52	94.48	9.0	1.6%

Our Team and Sponsors

Our group at Georgia Tech



Sponsors



72

72