

**Structural/Sacrificial Material Combinations**

Structural Material	Sacrificial Material	Etchant
Poly-Si	$SiO_2$ , PSG, LTO	HF, BHF
Al	Photoresist	$O_2$ plasma
$SiO_2$	Poly-Si	$XeF_2$
Al	Si	TMAH, $XeF_2$
Poly-SiGe	Poly-Ge	$H_2O_2$ , hot $H_2O$

- Must consider other layers, too, as release etchants generally have a finite E.R. on any material
- Ex: concentrated HF (48.8 wt. %)
  - Polysilicon E.R. ~ 0
  - Silicon nitride E.R. ~ 1-14 nm/min
  - Wet thermal  $SiO_2$  ~ 1.8-2.3  $\mu m$ /min
  - Annealed PSG ~ 3.6  $\mu m$ /min
  - Aluminum (Si rich) ~ 4 nm/min (much faster in other Al)

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**Wet Etch Rates (f/ K. Williams)**

Wet-Etch Rates for Micromachining and IC Processing (A/min)																		
ETCHANT EQUIPMENT CONDITIONS		TARGET MATERIAL		MATERIAL		Wet Etch Rates		Ave. Etch Rate		Spec. Etch Rate		Obs. Etch%						
		SC 100	Poly n	Poly m	Wet Ox	Dry Ox	LTO	PSO	PSD	Steel	Ni							
Concentrated HF (48%)		-	0	230	230	340	15K	15K	36K	150	32	42	<50	F	0	0		
Wet Etch Room Temperature		-	0	230	230	340	15K	15K	36K	150	32	42	<50	F	0	0		
10:1 HF		-	7	0	230	230	340	15K	4700	11	3	2500	0	11K	<70	0	0	
Wet Etch Room Temperature		-	0	0	230	230	340	15K	4700	11	3	2500	0	11K	<70	0	0	
25:1 HF		-	0	0	95	95	150	W	1500	5	1	W	0	-	-	0	0	
Wet Etch Room Temperature		-	0	0	95	95	150	W	1500	5	1	W	0	-	-	0	0	
5:1 HF		-	9	2	1000	1000	1200	6000	4400	8	4	1400	<50	F	1000	0	0	
Wet Etch Room Temperature		-	0	0	1000	1000	1200	6000	4400	8	3	1000	0	-	-	500	300	
Phosphoric Acid (8%)		-	9	0	0.7	0.8	<1	37	24	21	19	9800	-	-	-	500	300	
Hypochlorite with Reflux (10%)		-	0	0	0	0	0	3000	3000	4	24	42	-	-	-	0	0	
Silica Detergent (15:10H <sub>2</sub> O : 40:H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub> : 5:NH <sub>3</sub> F)		1500	3100	1000	97	W	110	4000	1100	2	3	4000	120	3000	-	0	0	
Wet Etch Room Temperature		1200	3000	1000	97	W	110	4000	1100	2	3	4000	120	3000	-	0	0	
KOH (1 KOH : 2 H <sub>2</sub> O by weight)		<100: Silica	14K	>10K	F	77	-	94	W	380	0	0	W	0	-	-	F	F
H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub> (30%)		-	41	-	41	-	41	W	380	0	0	W	0	-	-	0	0	
Ammonium Etchant Type A (7H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub> : 1HNO <sub>3</sub> : 1HAc : 1H <sub>2</sub> O)		Amonium	-	<10	<9	0	0	0	-	<20	0	2	6000	-	-	0	0	0
H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub> (30%)		-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	6000	-	-	0	0	0
Titanium Etchant (20 H <sub>2</sub> O : 1H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub> : 1HF)		Titanium	-	13	-	100	W	W	W	2100	8	4	W	0	8000	-	0	0
Wet Etch Room Temperature		-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	W	0	-	0	0	0
H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub> (30%)		Titanium	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<20	190	0	60	<2	0
Wet Etch Room Temperature		-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	190	0	60	<2	0	0
Perchloric Acid (90:H <sub>2</sub> O : 1H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub> )		Cleaning off metal and organic	-	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	1600	-	2400	-	F	F
Wet Etch Room Temperature		Perchloric	-	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	1600	-	2400	-	F	F
Acetone		Phenomenal	-	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	-	>4K	>3K
Wet Etch Room Temperature		-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	-	0	0

Notes: - wet etch performed; Wafer performance, but known to be poor (< 10 A/min); Purpose of thin pedaled during etch or when static; Avoids wafer visibility attacked and degraded. Each structure is of a 4-6x wider than the transparent lines and half of the width for single-crystal silicon and the metals. Each batch will vary with temperature and prior use of solvents, area of exposure of lines, other materials present (e.g., photoresist), film impurities and restructurings, etc. Sheet rotation should be expected.

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**Film Etch Chemistries**

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- For some popular films:

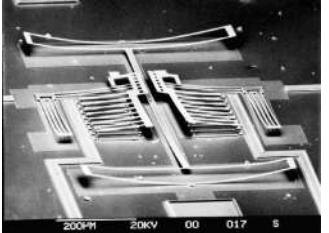
Material	Wet etchant	Etch rate [nm/min]	Dry etchant	Etch rate [nm/min]
Polysilicon	HNO <sub>3</sub> :H <sub>2</sub> O: NH <sub>4</sub> F	120-600	SF <sub>6</sub> + He	170-920
Silicon nitride	H <sub>3</sub> PO <sub>4</sub>	5	SF <sub>6</sub>	150-250
Silicon dioxide	HF	20-2000	CHF <sub>3</sub> + O <sub>2</sub>	50-150
Aluminum	H <sub>3</sub> PO <sub>4</sub> :HNO <sub>3</sub> : CH <sub>3</sub> COOH	660	Cl <sub>2</sub> + SiCl <sub>4</sub>	100-150
Photoresist	Acetone	>4000	O <sub>2</sub>	35-3500
Gold	KI	40	n/a	n/a

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**Issues in Surface Micromachining**

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- Stiction:** sticking of released devices to the substrate or to other on-chip structures
  - Difficult to tell if a structure is stuck to substrate by just looking through a microscope
- Residual Stress in Thin Films**
  - Causes bending or warping of microstructures
  - Limits the sizes (and sometimes geometries) of structures
- Topography**
  - Stringers can limit the number of structural levels

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**Microstructure Stiction**

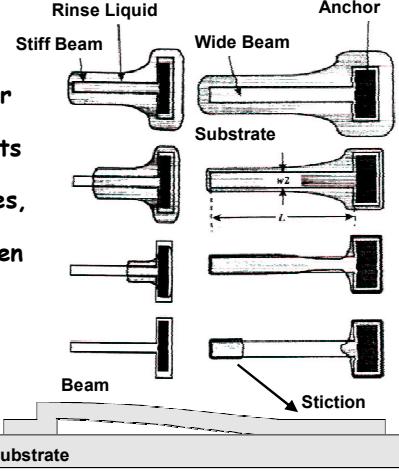
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**Microstructure Stiction**

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- Stiction:** the unintended sticking of MEMS surfaces
- Release stiction:**
  - Occurs during drying after a wet release etch
  - Capillary forces of droplets pull surfaces into contact
  - Very strong sticking forces, e.g., like two microscope slides w/ a droplet between
- In-use stiction:** when device surfaces adhere during use due to:
  - Capillary condensation
  - Electrostatic forces
  - Hydrogen bonding
  - Van der Waals forces



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## Hydrophilic Versus Hydrophobic

**Hydrophilic:** A surface that invites wetting by water. Get stiction. Occurs when the contact angle  $\theta_{\text{water}} < 90^\circ$ .

**Hydrophobic:** A surface that repels wetting by water. Avoids stiction. Occurs when the contact angle  $\theta_{\text{water}} > 90^\circ$ .

Lotus Surface [Univ. Mainz]

Hydrophilic case  $P_2$

Hydrophobic case  $P_2$

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## Microstructure Stiction

- Thin liquid layer between two solid plates  $\Rightarrow$  adhesive
- If the contact angle between liquid and solid  $\theta_c < 90^\circ$ :
  - Pressure inside the liquid is lower than outside
  - Net attractive force between the plates
- The pressure difference (i.e., force) is given by the Laplace equation

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## Microstructure Stiction Modeling

Laplace Equation: Surface Tension @ the Liquid-Air Interface  $F = -\Delta P_{\text{la}} A = \frac{2A\gamma_{\text{la}} \cos \theta_c}{g}$

$\Delta P_{\text{la}} = \frac{\gamma_{\text{la}}}{r} \leftarrow$  Radius of Curvature of the Meniscus ( $\leftarrow$  if concave)

Pressure Difference @ the Liquid-Air Interface  $[r = \frac{(g/2)}{\cos \theta_c}]$

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## Avoiding Stiction

- Reduce droplet area via mechanical design approaches
  - Standoff Bumps
  - Meniscus-Shaping Features
- Avoid liquid-vapor meniscus formation
  - Use solvents that sublime
  - Use vapor-phase sacrificial layer etch
- Modify surfaces to change the meniscus shape from concave (small contact angle) to convex (large contact angle)
  - Use teflon-like films
  - Use hydrophobic self-assembled monolayers (SAMs)

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## Supercritical CO<sub>2</sub> Drying

- A method for stictionless drying of released microstructures by immersing them in CO<sub>2</sub> at its supercritical point
- Basic Strategy: Eliminate surface tension-derived sticking by avoiding a liquid-vapor meniscus
- Procedure:
  - Etch oxide in solution of HF
  - Rinse thoroughly in DI water, but do not dry
  - Transfer the wafer from water to methanol
  - Displace methanol w/ liquid CO<sub>2</sub>
  - Apply heat & pressure to take the CO<sub>2</sub> past its critical pt.
  - Vent to lower pressure and allow the supercritical CO<sub>2</sub> to revert to gas → liquid-to-gas transition in supercritical region means no capillary forces to cause stiction

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## Hydrophilic Versus Hydrophobic

contact angle  $\theta_1$

Hydrophilic case  $P_2$

Hydrophobic case  $P_1$

- Hydrophilic:
  - A surface that invites wetting by water
  - Get stiction
  - Occurs when the contact angle  $\theta_{water} < 90^\circ$
- Hydrophobic:
  - A surface that repels wetting by water
  - Avoids stiction
  - Occurs when the contact angle  $\theta_{water} > 90^\circ$

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## Tailoring Contact Angle Via SAM's

- Can reduce stiction by tailoring surfaces so that they induce a water contact angle  $> 90^\circ$

### Self-Assembled Monolayers (SAM's):

- Monolayers of "stringy" molecules covalently bonded to the surface that then raise the contact angle
- Beneficial characteristics:
  - Conformal, ultrathin
  - Low surface energy
  - Covalent bonding makes them wear resistant
  - Thermally stable (to a point)

OTS	$\theta_{water}$
OT SAM	$112 \pm 0.7^\circ$
$\text{SiO}_2$	$< 10^\circ$

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## Dry Release

Encapsulation Si

Sealing Oxide

Beams of Tuning Fork

Electrode

Released via vapor phase HF [Kenny, et al., Stanford]

(d)

(e)

(f)

silicon dioxide

polymer column

etch holes

sacrificial oxide etch

oxygen plasma column removal

[Kobayashi]

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**Residual Stress**

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### Residual Stress in Thin Films

- After release, poorly designed microstructures might buckle, bend, or warp → often caused by residual film stress
- Origins of residual stress,  $\sigma$ 
  - Growth processes
    - Non-equilibrium deposition
    - Grain morphology change
    - Gas entrapment
    - Doping
  - Thermal stresses
    - Thermal expansion mismatch of materials → introduce stress during cool-down after deposition
    - Annealing

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### Need to Control Film Stress

- Resonance frequency expression for a lateral resonator:

$$f_0 \approx \frac{1}{2\pi} \sqrt{\frac{4E_y t W^3}{ML^3} + \frac{24\sigma_r t W}{5ML}}$$

Since  $W \ll L$ , the stress term will dominate if  $\sigma_r \sim E_y$

Basic term      Stress term

$E_y$  = Young's modulus  
 $\sigma_r$  = stress  
 $t$  = thickness  
 $W$  = beam width  
 $L$  = beam length  
 $M$  = mass

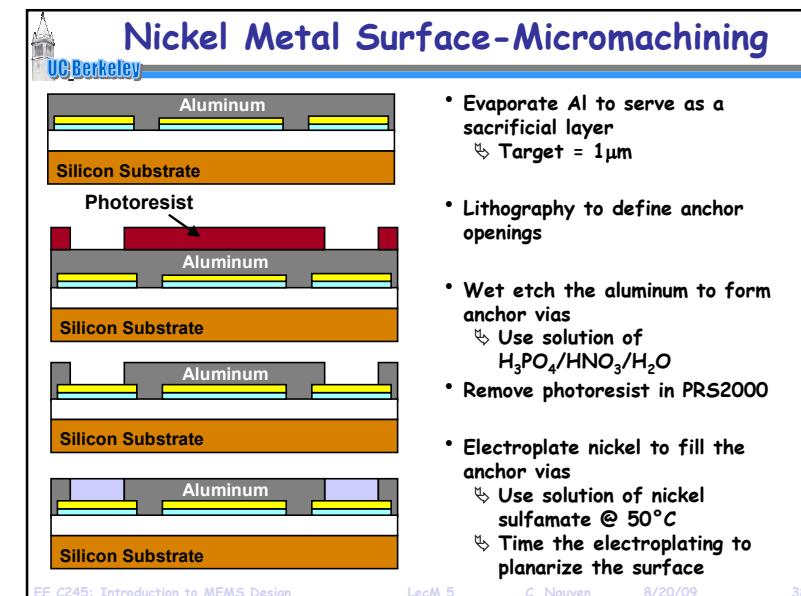
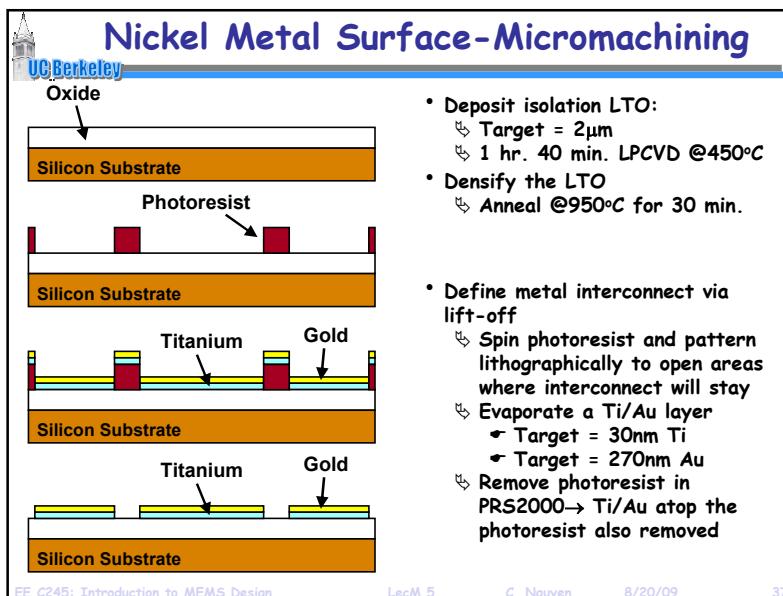
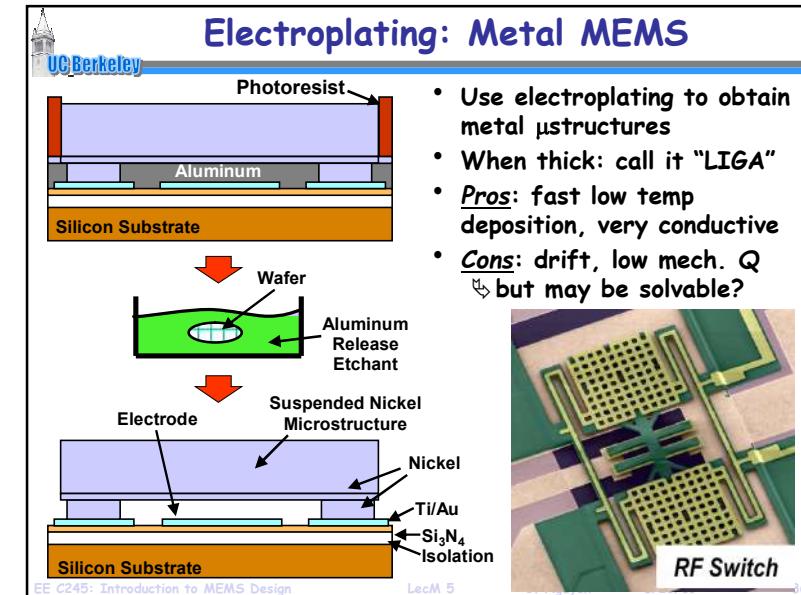
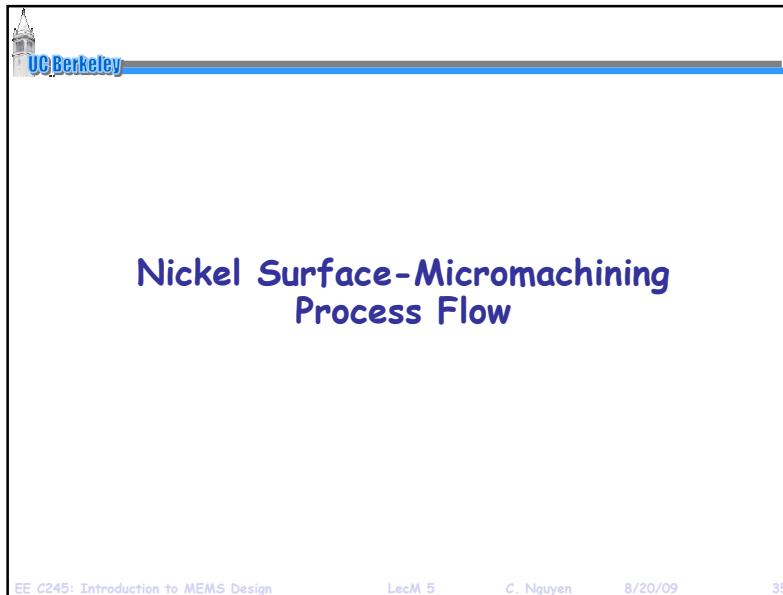
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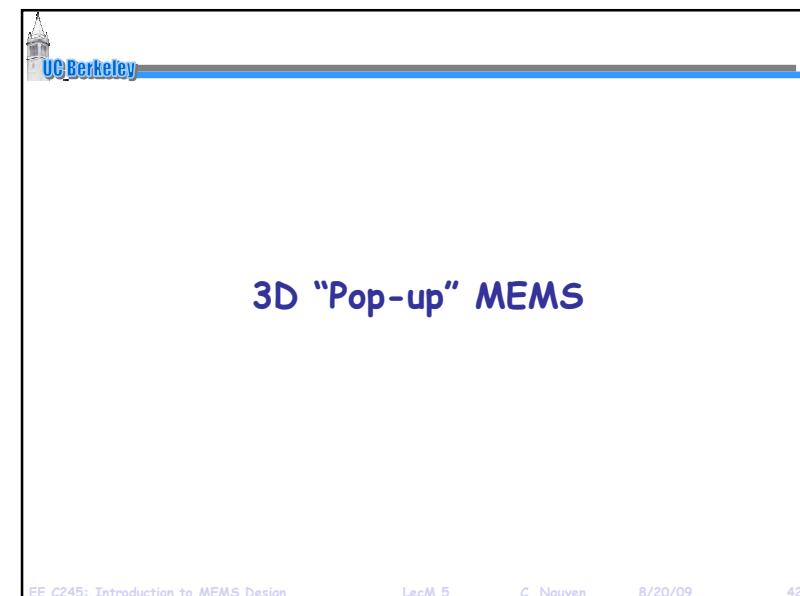
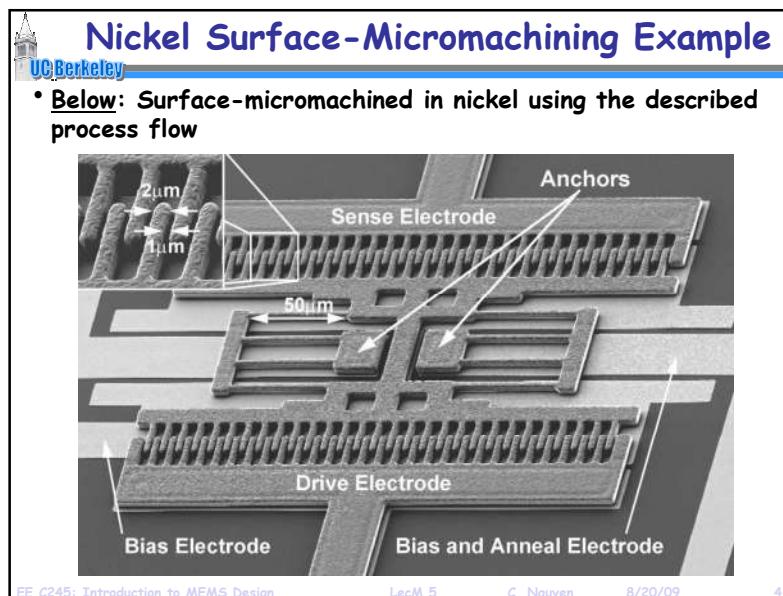
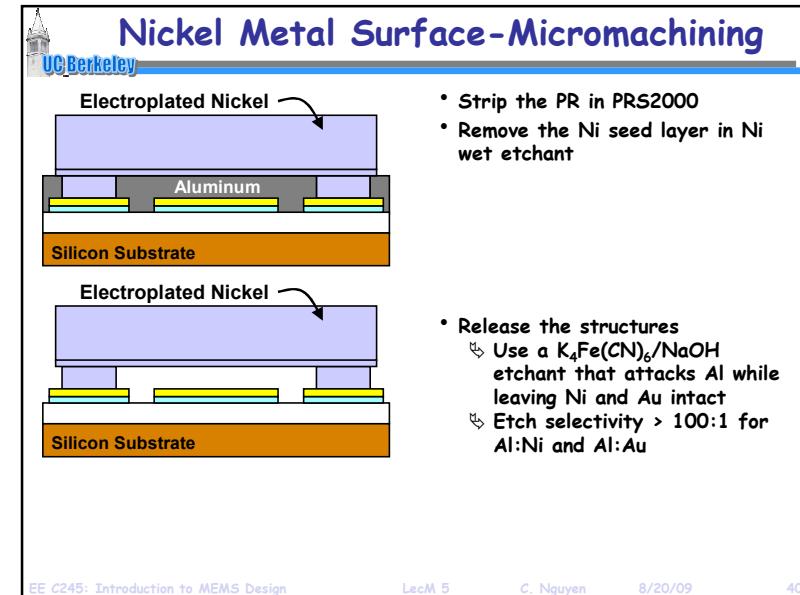
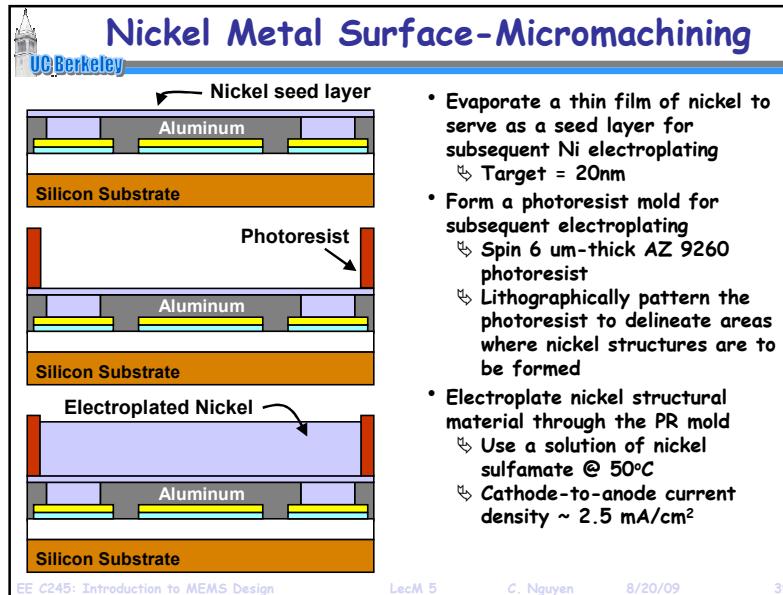
### Tensile Versus Compressive Stress

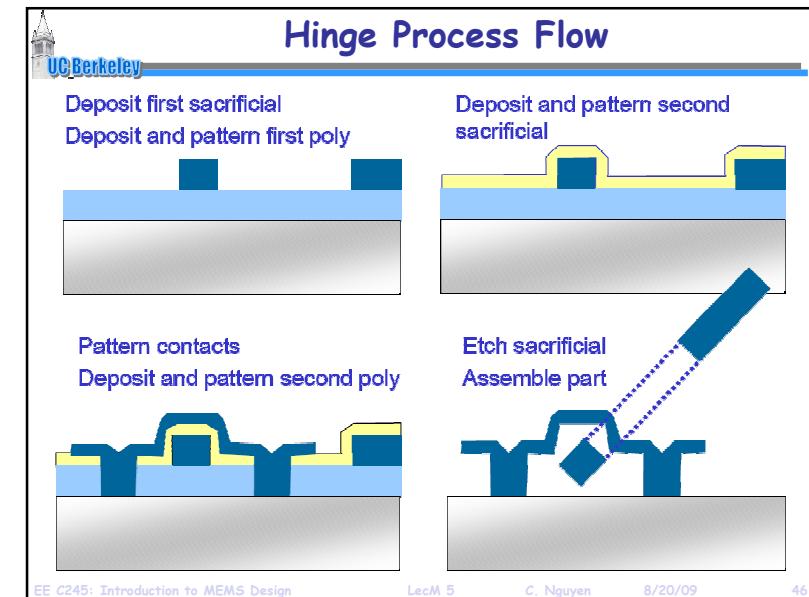
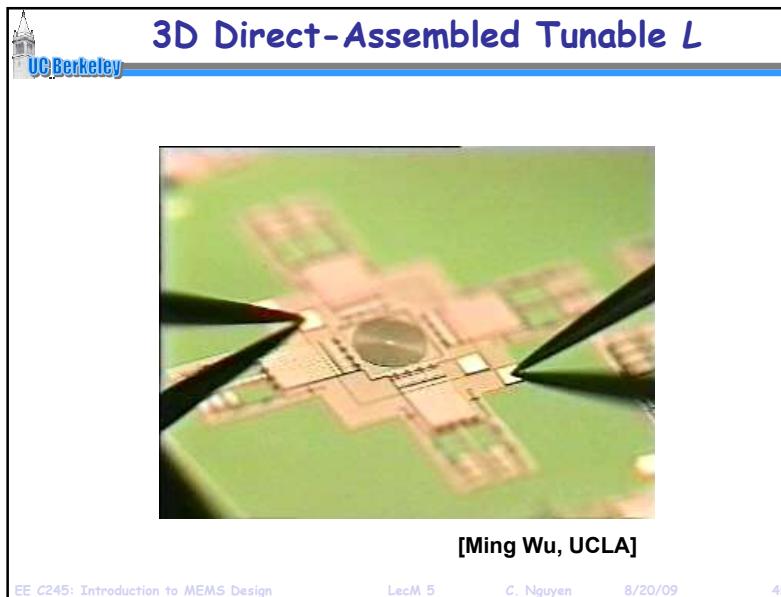
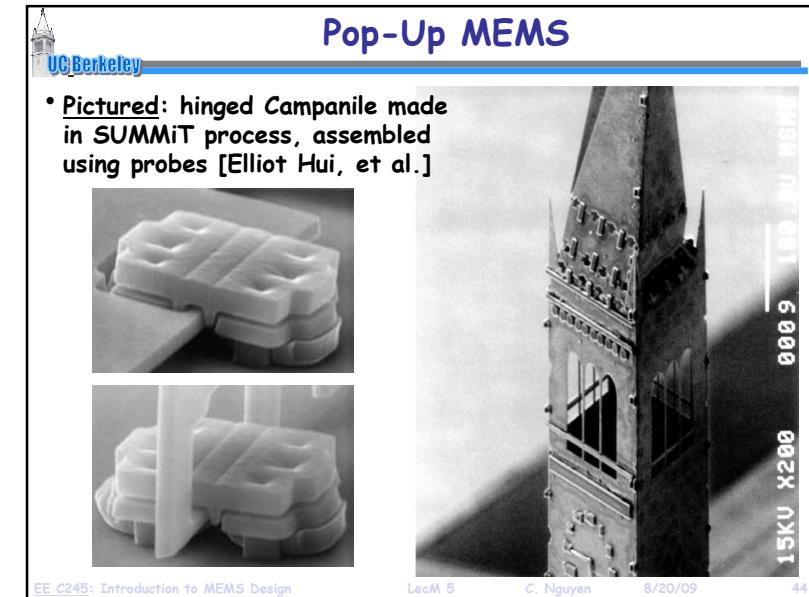
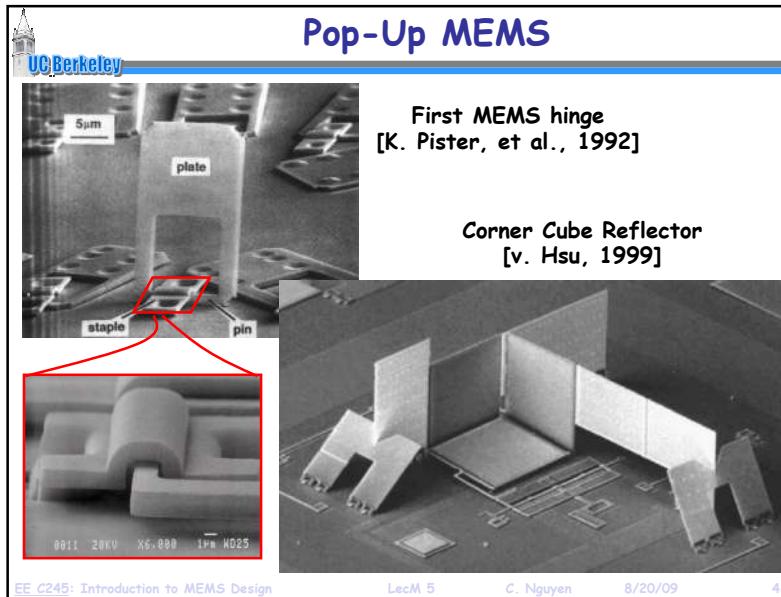
- Under **tensile stress**, a film wants to shrink w/r to its substrate
  - Caused, e.g., by differences in film vs. substrate thermal expansion coefficients
  - If suspended above a substrate and anchored to it at two points, the film will be "stretched" by the substrate
- Under **compressive stress**, a film wants to expand w/r to its substrate
  - If suspended above a substrate and anchored to it at two points, the film will buckle over the substrate

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**"Foundry" MEMS:  
The MUMPS Process**



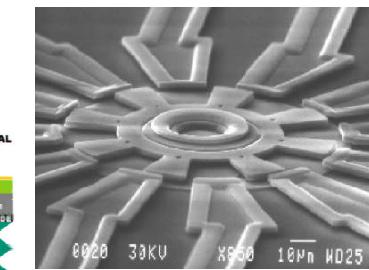
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**MUMPS: MultiUser MEMS ProcesS**

**UC Berkeley**

- Originally created by the Microelectronics Center of North Carolina (MCNC) → now owned by MEMSCAP in France
- Three-level polysilicon surface micromachining process for prototyping and "foundry" services
- Designed to service as many users as possible; basically an attempt to provide a universal MEMS process
- 8 photomasks
- \$4,900 for 1 cm<sup>2</sup> dies

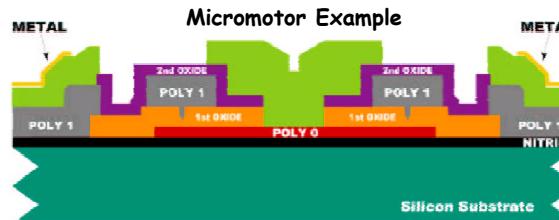
Micromotor fabricated via MUMPS



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**MUMPS: MultiUser MEMS ProcesS**

**Micromotor Example**



**Material Layer**   **Thickness (μm)**   **Lithography Level Name**

Nitride	0.6	—
Poly 0	0.5	POLY0 (HOLE0)
First Oxide	2.0	DIMPLE ANCHOR1
Poly 1	2.0	POLY1 (HOLE1)
Second Oxide	0.75	POLY1_POLY2_VIA ANCHOR2
Poly 2	1.5	POLY2 (HOLE2)
Metal	0.5	METAL (HOLEM)

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**Masks in polyMUMPS**

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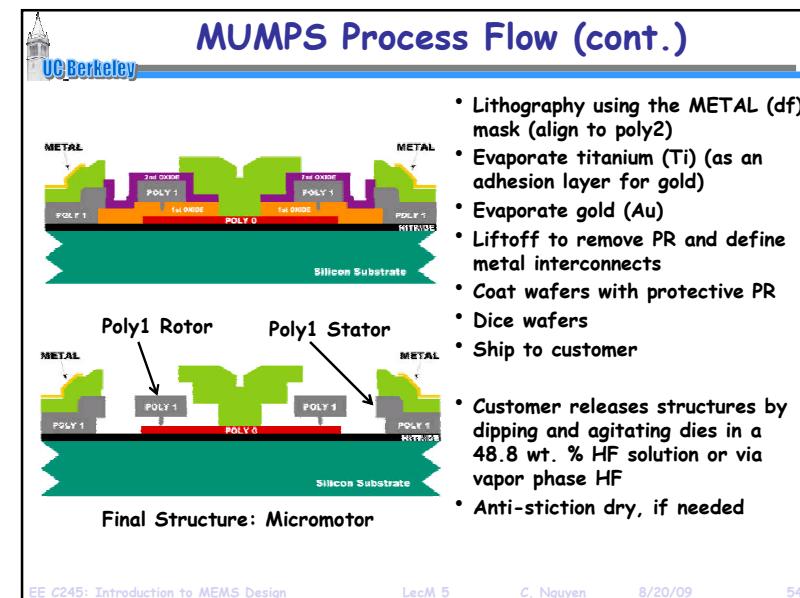
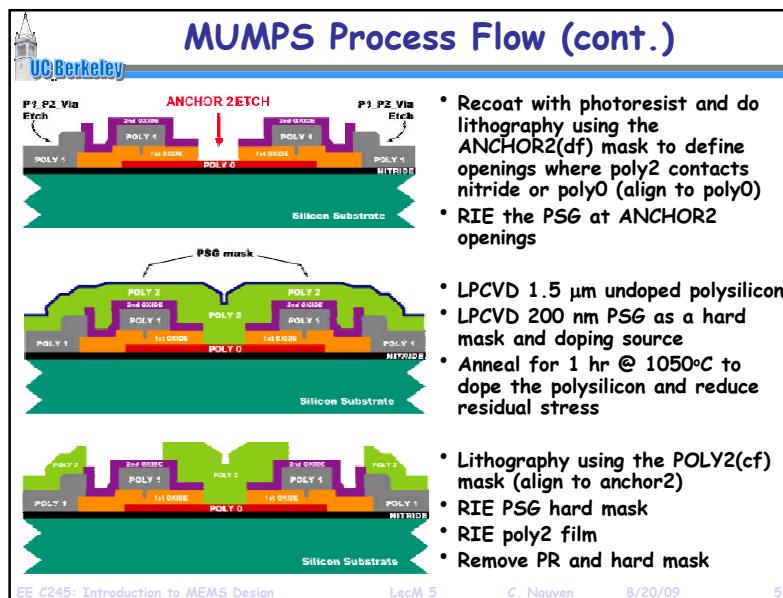
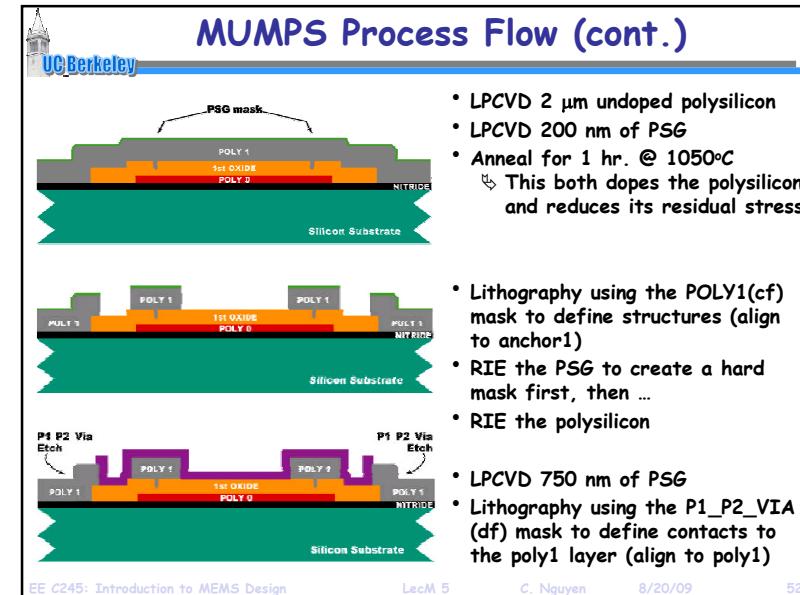
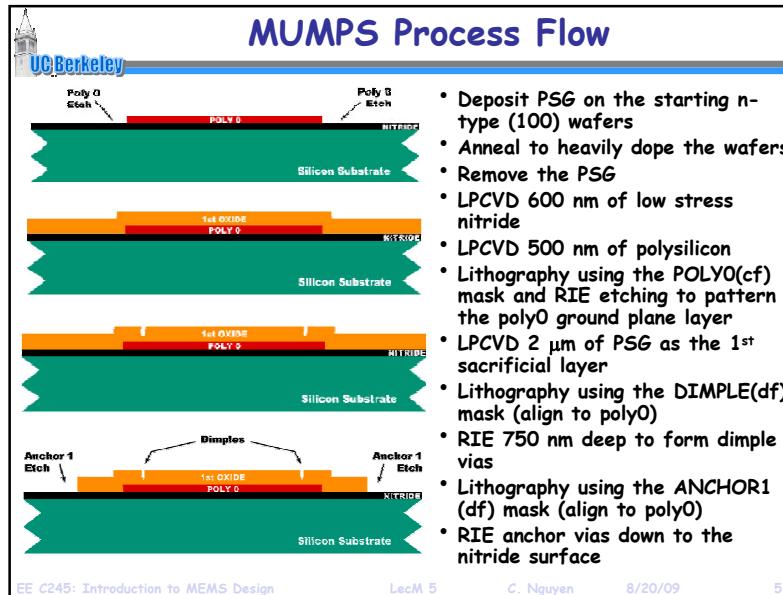
**Minimum set of masks that must be used in MUMPS**

Mnemonic level name	Field type	Purpose
POLY0	light	pattern ground plane
ANCHOR1	dark	open holes for Poly 1 to Nitride or Poly 0 connection
DIMPLE	dark	create dimples/bushings for Poly 1
POLY1	light	pattern Poly 1
POLY1_POLY2_VIA	dark	open holes for Poly 1 to Poly 2 connection
ANCHOR2	dark	open holes for Poly 2 to Nitride or Poly 0 connection
POLY2	light	pattern Poly 2
METAL	light	pattern Metal
HOLE0	dark	provide holes for POLY0
HOLE1	dark	provide release holes for POLY1
HOLE2	dark	provide release holes for POLY2
HOLEM	dark	provide release holes in METAL

**Extra masks for more flexibility & ease of release**

- Field type:
  - ↳ Light (or clear) field (cf): in layout, boxes represent features that will stay through fabrication
  - ↳ Dark field (df): in layout, boxes represent holes to be cut out

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### MUMPS: MultiUser MEMS Process

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- 8 photomasks
- \$4,900 for 1 cm<sup>2</sup> dies

Micromotor fabricated via MUMPS

Scanning Electron Micrograph (SEM) details: 0020 30KV X250 10µm WD25

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### polyMUMPS Minimum Feature Constraints

- Minimum feature size
  - Determined by MUMPS' photolithographic resolution and alignment precision
  - Violations result in missing (unanchored), under/oversized, or fused features
  - Use minimum feature only when absolutely necessary

	Nominal [µm]	Min Feature [µm]	Min Spacing [µm]
POLY0, POLY1, POLY2	3	2	2
POLY1_POLY2_VIA	3	2	2
ANCHOR1, ANCHOR2	3	3	2
DIMPLE	3	2	3
METAL	3	3	3
HOLE1, HOLE2	4	3	3
HOLEM	5	4	4

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### MUMPS Design Rules (cont.)

Rule	Rule Letter	Figure #	Min. Value (µm)
POLY0 space to ANCHOR1	A	2.5	4.0
POLY0 enclose ANCHOR1	B	2.5	4.0
POLY0 enclose POLY1	C	2.6	4.0
POLY0 enclose POLY2	D	2.7	5.0
POLY0 enclose ANCHOR2	E	2.8	5.0
POLY0 space to ANCHOR2	F	2.8	5.0

Cross Sections: Poly0, Oxide1, Oxide2, Poly1, Poly2, Metal

Mask Levels: Poly0, Anchor1, Poly1, Poly2, Via, Poly2, Anchor2, Metal, Dimple

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### MUMPS Design Rules (cont.)

Rule	Min. Value (µm)
POLY1 enclose ANCHOR1	G 4.0
POLY1 enclose DIMPLE	N 4.0
POLY1 enclose POLY1_POLY2_VIA	H 4.0
POLY1 enclose POLY2	I 4.0
POLY1 space to ANCHOR2	K 3.0
Lateral etch holes space in POLY1	R ≤30 (max. value)

Cross Sections: Poly0, Oxide1, Oxide2, Poly1, Poly2, Metal

Mask Levels: Poly0, Anchor1, Poly1, Poly2, Via, Poly2, Anchor2, Metal, Dimple

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**MUMPS Design Rules (cont.)**



Rule	Rule Letter	Figure #	Min. Value ( $\mu\text{m}$ )
POLY0 space to ANCHOR1	A	2.5	4.0
POLY0 enclose ANCHOR1	B	2.5	4.0
POLY0 enclose POLY1	C	2.6	4.0
POLY0 enclose POLY2	D	2.7	5.0
POLY0 enclose ANCHOR2	E	2.8	5.0
POLY0 space to ANCHOR2	F	2.8	5.0

Rule	Rule Letter	Figure #	Min. Value ( $\mu\text{m}$ )
POLY1 enclose ANCHOR1	G	2.6	4.0
POLY1 enclose DIMPLE	N	2.13	4.0
POLY1 enclose POLY1_POLY2_VIA	H	2.9, 2.11	4.0
POLY1 enclose POLY2	O	2.14	4.0
POLY1 space to ANCHOR2	K	2.11	3.0
*Lateral etch holes space in POLY1	R	2.15	$\leq 30$ (max. value)

Rule	Rule Letter	Figure #	Min. Value ( $\mu\text{m}$ )
POLY2 enclose ANCHOR2	J	2.7, 2.10	5.0
POLY2 enclose POLY1_POLY2_VIA	L	2.9	4.0
POLY2 cut-in POLY1	P	2.14	5.0
POLY2 cut-out POLY1	Q	2.14	4.0
POLY2 enclose METAL	M	2.12	3.0
POLY2 space to POLY1	I	2.10	3.0
HOLE2 enclose HOLE1	T	2.16	2.0
HOLEM enclose HOLE2	U	2.16	2.0
*Lateral etch holes space in POLY2	S	2.15	$\leq 30$ (max. value)

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**MUMPS Design Rules (cont.)**



Level 1	Level 2	Min. Feature	Min. Spacing	Enclose	Spacing	Cut-In	Cut-Out
POLY0	-	2	2				
	ANCHOR1			4/B/2.5	4/A/2.5		
	POLY1			4/C/2.6			
	ANCHOR2			5/E/2.8	5/F/2.8		
POLY1	-	2	2 / 2.5 <sup>x</sup>				
	POLY0						
	ANCHOR1			4/G/2.6			
	ANCHOR2				3/K/2.11		
	POLY2			4/O/2.14			
	DIMPLE			4/N/2.13			
POLY2	POLY1_POLY2_VIA			4/H/2.9			
	-	2	2 / 2.5 <sup>x</sup>				
	POLY0						
	POLY1				3/I/2.10	5/P/2.14	4/Q/2.14
	VIA			4/L/2.9			
	ANCHOR2			5/J/2.7			
	METAL			3/M/2.12			
	HOLEM	HOLE2		2/U/2.16			
	HOLE2	HOLE1		2/T/2.16			

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**TABLE 2.7.** PolyMUMPs design rule reference sheet. Table shows minimum dimensions ( $\mu\text{m}$ ), rule name, and figure number, respectively.