



Contribution ID: 1226  
 competition)

Type: **Oral (Student, In Competition) / Orale (Étudiant(e), inscrit à la**

## Enhancing the Luminescence of Silicon Nanoclusters embedded in Silicon Nitride

*Tuesday, 14 June 2016 09:30 (15 minutes)*

In the quest to develop a silicon (Si) based light source, for optical and optoelectronic applications, researchers have explored various techniques. One such technique is the use of self-assembled Si-nanoclusters (Si-NC) embedded in a silicon nitride (Si<sub>3</sub>N<sub>x</sub>) matrix. This system has shown great promise, displaying both photoluminescence and electroluminescence.[1,2] Despite such achievements, the luminescence of Si-NC/Si<sub>3</sub>N<sub>x</sub> devices is still too low in intensity to be used in a commercial light source. An approach that has recently gained interest is the luminescence enhancement of Si-NCs using the localized surface plasmon resonance (LSPR) of metallic nanostructures (m-NS). The majority of research in this area has focused on the use of metals such as gold (Au) and silver (Ag), which are expensive and would increase the cost of any device made using them.[3-6] In our group, we explore how m-NS made using aluminum (Al) can be tailored to enhance the luminescence of Si-NC/Si<sub>3</sub>N<sub>x</sub> devices. Al has the added advantage of being compatible with current manufacturing techniques. To fabricate these m-NS we use nanosphere lithography (NSL). We also examine the mechanisms of luminescence of our Si-NC/Si<sub>3</sub>N<sub>x</sub> devices, to facilitate improvements in luminescence intensity.[7] The results of our work will facilitate the development of commercially viable and cost efficient Si-based light emitting devices.

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**Primary authors:** Ms CADOGAN, Carolyn (The University of Western Ontario, Department of Physics and Astronomy); Prof. GONCHAROVA, Lyudmila (The University of Western Ontario, Department of Physics and Astronomy); Prof. SIMPSON, Peter (The University of Western Ontario, Department of Physics and Astronomy)

**Co-authors:** Mr ZHANG, Bairong (The University of Western Ontario, Department of Chemistry); Prof. LAGUGNÉ-LABARTHET, François (The University of Western Ontario, Department of Chemistry)

**Presenter:** Ms CADOGAN, Carolyn (The University of Western Ontario, Department of Physics and Astronomy)

**Session Classification:** T1-3 Materials Characterization: Electrical, Optical, Magnetic, Thermal (DCMMP) / Caractérisation des matériaux: électrique, optique, magnétique et thermique (DPMCM)

**Track Classification:** Condensed Matter and Materials Physics / Physique de la matière condensée et matériaux (DCMMP-DPMCM)