Tuesday Morning, November 11, 2014

Energy Frontiers Focus Topic
Room: 315 - Session EN+AS+EM+SE-TuM

Fuel Formation and Thermal Transport
Moderator: Michael Filler, Georgia Institute of Technology

8:00am **EN+AS+EM+SE-TuM1** **Unraveling Thermodynamic and Kinetic Factors in Solar-Thermochemical Fuel Production**, *Sossina Haile*, California Institute of Technology **INVITED**
Perhaps the greatest challenge facing our planet is sustainable energy. Given the vast solar energy resource base available to modern society, key to addressing this challenge is the conversion of solar energy into a storable form suitable for on-demand utilization. So emerges the concept of 'Solar Fuels.' Amongst many approaches currently pursued to generate solar fuels, thermochemical dissociation of water splitting is particularly attractive. It provides the benefits of full utilization of the solar spectrum and inherent temporal separation of hydrogen and oxygen gases. In recognition of these advantages, numerous multi-step cycles have been considered over the past several decades. Recently, two-step cycles making use of *non-stoichiometric* oxides have received attention because of the simplicity of their implementation. The approach relies on the large oxygen nonstoichiometry change that the material undergoes in response to variations in oxygen partial pressure (pO_2) and temperature (T). Specifically, upon exposure to high temperatures ceria undergoes reduction without change in crystalline phase to release oxygen. On cooling in the presence of H_2O (or CO_2), the oxide is reoxidized, releasing H_2 (or CO). The success of the method relies not only on favorable thermodynamics but also on facile kinetics, both in terms of surface reaction rates and bulk diffusion coefficient. Accordingly, we have undertaken a comprehensive study of ceria and its doped derivatives to assess both the equilibrium redox behavior by thermogravimetric methods and the kinetic response by conductivity relaxation methods. We find, for example, that introduction of Zr strongly increases the absolute non-stoichiometry of ceria, but at a penalty in terms of the sensitivity of the nonstoichiometry to changes in environmental conditions and in terms of bulk diffusivity. In another example, we find that the relaxation behavior of Sm-doped ceria is substantially more rapid than that of both undoped and Zr-doped ceria, a result that is tentatively assigned to differences in species mobilities. The implications of these fundamental differences in material properties for thermochemical fuel production are discussed.

8:40am **EN+AS+EM+SE-TuM3** **Controlling Catalysis on Metal Nanoparticles by Direct Photoexcitation of Adsorbate-Metal Bonds**, *M.J. Kale, T. Avanesian,* University of California, Riverside, *H. Xin, J. Yan,* SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory, *Phillip Christopher*, University of California, Riverside **INVITED**
Heterogeneous photocatalysis is typically assumed to occur via photon absorption by a solid-state photocatalyst (only the photocatalyst electronic states are involved in photon absorption) followed by charge carrier diffusion through the photocatalyst bulk and subsequent transfer to adsorbates. This process of energetic charge carrier generation and transfer results in wavelength dependent quantum efficiencies that strictly follow the absorption spectrum of the solid-state photocatalysts, regardless of the chemical transformation. The substrate (photocatalyst) mediated photo-absorption process inhibits approaches to control reaction selectivity by matching photon excitation wavelengths to bond specific electronic transitions, as typically done in molecular systems.

Here, we show that strong chemisorption bonds formed between CO and Pt metal surfaces can be activated with visible photons to drive catalysis through direct, resonant photoexcitation of hybridized Pt-CO states. This is enabled as the dominant photoexcitation mechanism (over substrate mediated photoexcitation) driving catalysis by using sub-5-nanometer Pt nanoparticle catalysts, where high surface area to volume ratios force photon absorption onto surface metal atoms. The direct photoexcitation process is observed to be significantly more efficient for driving photocatalysis than the indirect photoexcitation process when the energy of exciting photons is resonant with adsorbate specific electronic transitions involving hybridized metal-adsorbate states. It is also demonstrated that resonant photoexcitation of Pt-CO bonds on sub-5-nanometer Pt nanoparticles by visible light significantly enhances selectivity towards CO_2, over H_2O production, in the selective oxidation of CO by O_2 in an H_2 rich stream (also known as preferential CO oxidation). These results open new avenues to control catalytic reaction selectivity on sub 5-nm catalytic particles by resonant photoexcitation of adsorbate-specific electronic transitions involving hybridized metal and adsorbate states. It is expected that the development of insights into resonant electronic transitions between hybridized metal-adsorbate states should allow rational control of catalytic selectivity that cannot be achieved exclusively with thermal energy input.

9:20am **EN+AS+EM+SE-TuM5** **Atomistic Insights as the the pH Dependence of Onset Potential of the Oxygen Evolution Reaction on Hematite**, *Anders Hellman*, Chalmers University, Sweden
Hematite (α-Fe_2O_3) is an extensively investigated semiconductor for photoelectrochemical water oxidation, and recent research has shed light on many of the atomic processes involved. However, a controversy about the nature and role of surface states in the water oxidation reaction remains. Here first-principles calculations are used to investigate surface states present in hematite under photoelectrochemcial conditions. Most specifically a model describing how the onset potential for oxygen evolution reaction on hematite depend on the pH of the electrolyte is put-forth. The predictions of this model are confirmed to a high extent by measurements of the onset potential on hematite based model photoanodes. In particular, a linear dependence of the onset potential on the pH was observed, with a 49 mV / pH slope. Detailed photoelectrochemical characterization confirmed that the oxygen evolution reaction takes place via the same surface states irrespective of the pH. Moreover, the photovoltage and flat band potential of the hematite were also found to be pH independent. These results provide a framework for a deeper understanding of the OER when taking place on semiconductors (like hematite) via surface states

9:40am **EN+AS+EM+SE-TuM6** **Rational Design of Pt₃Ni Alloy Surface Structures for Oxygen Reduction**, *Liang Cao, T. Mueller*, Johns Hopkins University
A cluster expansion approach based on ab-initio calculations has been used to investigate the relationship between surface structures of $Pt_3Ni(111)$ alloy catalysts and their catalytic activity. With this approach, we build a direct bridge between the atomic structure and catalytic properties of Pt-Ni alloy system at a variety of compositions and chemical environments. The equilibrium near-surface structures are presented as a function of O_2 partial pressure and the chemical potential difference between Ni and Pt. We discuss the relative importance of strain, ligand, and ensemble effects in determining catalytic activity, and demonstrate how ensemble effects can be leveraged to rationally design alloy surfaces with optimal ORR activity by searching for surfaces with targeted oxygen binding energy.

11:00am **EN+AS+EM+SE-TuM10** **Molecular and Mesoscale Design for Organic and Hybrid Thermoelectrics**, *Rachel Segalman*, University of California, Santa Barbara **INVITED**
Thermoelectric materials for energy generation have several advantages over conventional power cycles including lack of moving parts, silent operation, miniaturizability, and CO2 free conversion of heat to electricity. Excellent thermoelectric efficiency requires a combination of high thermopower (S, V/K), high electrical conductivity (σ, S/cm), and low thermal conductivity (κ, W/mK). To date the best materials available have been inorganic compounds with relatively low earth abundance and highly complex, vacuum processing routes (and hence greater expense), such as Bi_2Te_3. Molecular materials and hybrid organic-inorganics bring the promise of solution processible, mechanically durable devices. While highly conductive polymers are now common place, they generally demonstrate low thermopower. Our work on molecular scale junctions that nanostructuring of organics allows them to act as thermionic filters between inorganic junctions which can lead to enhanced thermoelectric properties. We have taken inspiration from this fundamental understanding to design material systems in which we combine a high electrical conductivity, low thermal conductivity polymer with a nanoparticle that contributes high thermopower. Additionally, the work functions of the two materials are well-aligned which introduces the possibility of thermionic filtering at the interface and an additional boost to the power factor. The combination of these effects results in a new hybrid, solution processible material with a thermoelectric figure of merit within an order of magnitude of the Bi_2Te_3. In this talk, I will discuss both the use of thermoelectric measurements to gain insight to molecular junctions and how this insight translates to design principles for polymer and hybrid thermoelectrics.

11:40am **EN+AS+EM+SE-TuM12** **Advances in Solid-State Energy Harvesting from Asymmetric Thermoelectric Devices**, *B. Cook, Jay Lewis*, RTI International
The amount of thermal energy rejected as waste heat from industrial processes in the United States has been estimated at 32 quadrillion BTU per year, with an associated emission of 1,680 million metric tons of carbon

dioxide. The ability to cost-effectively convert a portion of this thermal energy into useful electrical energy could improve energy efficiency, reduce operating costs, and decrease CO_2 emissions. Waste heat is typically categorized by temperature as high-grade (650ºC and above), medium-grade (232ºC to 650ºC, and low-grade (232ºC and below). In order to improve the thermal-to-electrical conversion efficiency of medium-grade waste heat, RTI has combined two different materials to form a high figure-of-merit, hybrid thermoelectric (TE) device. Recently-developed enhanced "TAGS-85", or e-TAGS, was employed as the p-leg, while the n leg was comprised of improved half-Heusler (HH) material. This hybrid material pair provides a high ZT, lead-free TE material solution for waste heat recovery for use in vehicle or industrial platforms. The improved HH material employs two novel techniques to reduce thermal conductivity: (1) high-energy milling, and (2) addition of coherent inclusions. Single n-/p-couples were produced that achieved a 9.2% thermal to electric power conversion efficiency for $T_{hot} = 559°C$ and $\Delta T = 523K$. This is a significant efficiency improvement at a lower hot side temperature with the hybrid e-TAGS/HH single couple over the performance of a conventional, all HH couple. By optimizing the cross sectional areas of the pellets for equal heat flow, the resulting asymmetric couple achieved a conversion efficiency of 10.5% at $T_{hot} = 537°C$ and $\Delta T = 497°C$. A 49-couple hybrid module using HH materials paired with e-TAGS and operated with T_{hot} up to 600°C reached a maximum efficiency of 10%. The improved module efficiency is believed to be due to both improved materials and optimized cross-sectional area ratios between the n- and p- elements. We will also discuss additional advances in thermal to electric power conversion using multi-stage modules.

12:00pm **EN+AS+EM+SE-TuM13   The Effect of Particle Size and Surface Termination of n-Si on Thermal and Electrical Conductivity**, *Thomas Lopez, L. Mangolini,* University of California - Riverside, *S. Bux, J.P. Fleurial*, California Institute of Technology

A discussion of synthesis and characterization of bulk nanocrystalline silicon with grain sizes of around 20 nm and thermal conductivities as small as 100 mW/cmK at room temperature, will be presented. Nanostructured materials have great potential for thermoelectric applications because of the reduction in thermal conductivity due to phonon scattering at grain boundaries [1] and silicon is a well-understood, cheap, earth-abundant material. Other silicon nanostructures, such as nanowires [2], are being investigated as viable thermoelectric materials. We have used, for the first time, the combination of a non-thermal plasma process for the synthesis of silicon nanocrystals with hot pressing to produce bulk nanostructured silicon samples. The non-thermal plasma synthetic route has been proposed for the production of photo-luminescent silicon quantum dots with narrow size distribution (3 +/- 0.5 nm) [3]. The same reactor has been scaled up to produce silicon nanocrystals at a rate of hundreds of milligrams per hour. Silicon powder with sizes between 5 nm and 15 nm has been produced using either silane (SiH4) or silicon tetrachloride (SiCl4), which are low-cost silicon precursors. Results have shown surface termination of the non-thermal plasma synthesized particle, i.e. H or Cl, play a role in densification kinetics. Hot pressing is a high pressure, high temperature process that allows for the production of samples with bulk like densities while limiting grain growth. In this study we have produced bulk (12 mm diameter, 2-4 mm in thickness) samples of nanocrystalline silicon with relative densities exceeding 95%. Characterization by XRD and TEM confirms that grain sizes are around 30 nm. The effects of surface termination of nano-silicon on grain growth and grain boundary conditions will be extensively discussed.

1. Dresselhaus, M.S., et al., Advanced Materials, 2007. 19(8): p. 1043-1053.

2. Hochbaum, A.I., et al., Nature, 2008. 451(7175): p. 163-U5.

3. Mangolini, L., et al., Nano Letters, 2005. 5(4): p. 655-659.

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