Table of Contents

1 Introduction 1
1.1 Optoelectronic devices for data- and telecommunications 1
1.2 Optoelectronic Modulators 3
1.3 Graphene as a novel material for electronic and optoelectronic devices 5
1.4 Graphene-based electro-optical modulators 6
1.5 Scope of this work 9
2 Solid state physics of graphene 11
2.1 Crystal structure and electronic properties of graphene 11
Carbon allotropes and graphene lattice 11
Hamiltonian and electronic band structure 12
Dispersion relation around the *K* point and Dirac fermions 15
Limitations of the approximated model 15
2.2 Graphene-light interaction 16
Optical conductivity 16
Dielectric function 17
Refractive index and absorption coefficient 18
Chemical potential and optical properties 18
Influence of intraband scattering rate and temperature 21
Spectral dependence of refractive index and absorption 22
2.3 Tuning of the chemical potential 25
Tuning via doping and adsorbates 25
Tuning via external electric field 26
Chemical potential in graphene 27
2.4 Summary 28
3 Design and simulation of graphene-polymer modulators 29
3.1 Active area and tuning mechanism 29
Graphene-capacitor active area 29
Voltage-induced tuning of the chemical potential 30
3.2 Design of the electro-optically active GP-EAM section 32
Models used in optical simulations 34
Methods for optical simulations of GP-EAMs 35
Chemical potential and voltage-tuning implementation 36
Simulation and design of the EOA section 38
3.3 Influence of graphene parameters on GP-EAM characteristics 43
Scattering time and wavelength 43
Graphene doping 45
3.4 RF design and electro-optical bandwidth 49
Design of the electrical device layout 50

Estimation of the electro-optical bandwidth 51
3.5 Design considerations and summary 55
4 Development of the graphene-polymer modulator fabrication process 57
4.1 Methods of graphene synthesis 57
Exfoliation – “Scotch tape” method 57
Epitaxial growth on crystalline substrates 58
Chemical vapor deposition on metals 58
Suitability of graphene fabrication methods for this work 59
4.2 Clean room processes for graphene-polymer devices 60
Spin-coating of polymers and photoresists 60
Plasma-enhanced chemical vapor deposition 60
Metal deposition 60
Photolithography 61
Dry-etching of graphene, polymers and silicon nitride 61
Wet-etching of metals and silicon nitride 61
4.3 Graphene transfer process and fabrication of devices 62
Process A – PMMA-assisted transfer 62
Process B – Gold-assisted transfer 65
4.4 Graphene characterization 67
Contact and sheet resistance 67
Charge carrier mobility and doping quantification 73
4.5 Summary and further optimization potential 80
5 Characterization of graphene-polymer modulators 81
5.1 Static measurements 81
Setup for static optical measurements 81
Influence of metal contact proximity 82
Tuning curves of graphene-polymer modulators 83
Comparison with simulations 85
Wavelength-dependence of graphene-polymer modulators 88
Polarization, optical power, and DC power consumption 90
On-wafer device statistics 93
5.2 RF measurements 95
Setup for electro-optic modulation experiments 95
Extinction ratio, bandwidth, and SNR 97
Wavelength-dependence of RF modulation 99
Comparison with bandwidth model 100
5.3 Summary and further optimization potential 101
6 Conclusion and outlook 103
7 References 107