

I have known Irina Ivanova since 1995. For the past 3 years she was enrolled in a series of advanced-level courses —Advanced Topics in Optics— taught by me, consisting of lectures, laboratory assignments and independent research projects. During those years I have got to know her well enough to evaluate her outstanding abilities, character and tremendous potential for research work.

The Advanced Topics course I taught included new theoretical concepts, as well new experimental techniques, and quite understandably certain parts of the course can be quite challenging for many students. However, because of her diligent and hard-working approach, she was soon well ahead of the class. I have to admit that her interesting and often difficult questions, often outside of the course description, made this experience as challenging for me as it was for my students. Irina has also proved to possess a knack of experimental technique. In the laboratory she demonstrated the ability to deal with the problems she came across in experiments in a non-standard way. Her overall approach to new tasks can be best described as careful and thorough.

Moreover, during the theoretical analysis of experimental work she showed a remarkable talent to quickly grasp any new concepts and apt at solving problems on paper. Besides, she is simply a very pleasant person to cooperate and communicate with.

I regard Irina as a very strong student among the top 5% of all the students I have taught during the last 20 years at Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology (MIPT). Taking into account that our Institute's undergraduate enrollment consists of less than 7% of female students, I am especially glad to see Irina performing so well. I could only wish we had more students with as much genuine interest in math and sciences as her.

I believe Irina to have excellent prospects of success in a physicist-researcher career and strongly recommend her to continue her education in the field of Physics at the graduate level at Boston University.

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