

January 20, 2021

Mathematical and Statistical Sciences
Clemson University
220 Parkway Drive
Clemson, SC 29631

Dear Committee:

**SCHOOL OF
MATHEMATICAL AND
STATISTICAL SCIENCES**
College of SCIENCE

Clemson University
220 Parkway Dr.
O-110 Martin Hall
Clemson, SC
29634-0975

P 864-656-3434
F 864-656-5230
mathsci@clemson.edu

My name is Jim Coykendall, and I am a Professor of Mathematics at Clemson University, and it is my pleasure to be able to write to you on behalf of Sylvia Wu.

I first met Sylvia in the last fall when she was a student in my Math 4560 (topology class) and frankly, she is perhaps my favorite “find” during my time here at Clemson. When she began my class in the fall of 2018, Sylvia was a philosophy major, but I am most pleased to find that before the end of the semester, she had added a second major in mathematical sciences.

Since being in my topology class, Sylvia has been in my Math 4120 class and Math 8510 class (at my invitation) and through my experiences with her, my opinion has continued to increase exponentially. In both 4210 and 8510, Sylvia was clearly one of the strongest students with respect to ability (even among the graduate students). She was the strongest among the group of undergraduates (and I would like to point out that, as a population, the undergraduates were stronger than the graduate students). In my view, Sylvia Wu is the undergraduate student that I have had over the past two or three years (perhaps a bit more) with the most raw talent in mathematics. And when it rains it pours, as Sylvia is amazingly talented with human interactions and communication as well (see below).

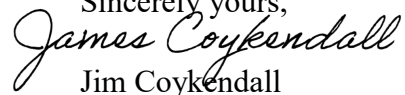
Last semester, I hand-picked Sylvia as my grader for Math 4120-6120, and she is the best grader that I have had here at Clemson (perhaps ever) at the graduate or undergraduate level. Her understanding of the mathematics and of people is profound and this makes her an amazing grader. I have never had a grader who had the balance of communication skills, mathematical skills, and devotion to duty. Given her abilities and incredible potential, I would love to have her here as one of my own students, but at the end of the day, that might be robbing this talented person of too many opportunities.

Sylvia is a probing and deep thinker and she is amazingly fast at picking up on complicated concepts. Her communication (both written and verbal) is among the strongest that I have seen. It is also of note to point out that she is very multi-talented and is nurturing a variety of interests. From that perspective, I would like to see Sylvia recognized not only for her

accomplishments, but also as encouragement to her potential in the field of mathematical sciences.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Coykendall". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Jim Coykendall

Professor of Mathematics

School of Mathematical Sciences

Clemson University