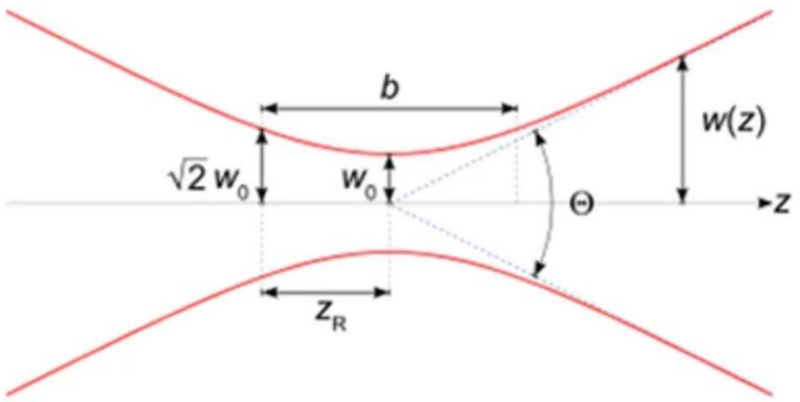
Lecture 23

Laser Sources and Applications



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Mar 2025

Content

- Gaussian Beam Definition
- Physical Optics in Zemax
- Diode Lasers
  - FAC / SAC Design
  - Fiber Coupling

References:

- Zemax Knowlegebase pages (https://support.zemax.com)
- Achen University Lectures (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MU4eOJw2sBQ)
- Optical System Design, R.E. Ficher et.al., 2nd Ed, McGraw-Hill Companies, (2008)

Introduction

Coherent light generated by lasers has properties different from light generated by other sources which we usually deal with in more conventional optical systems.

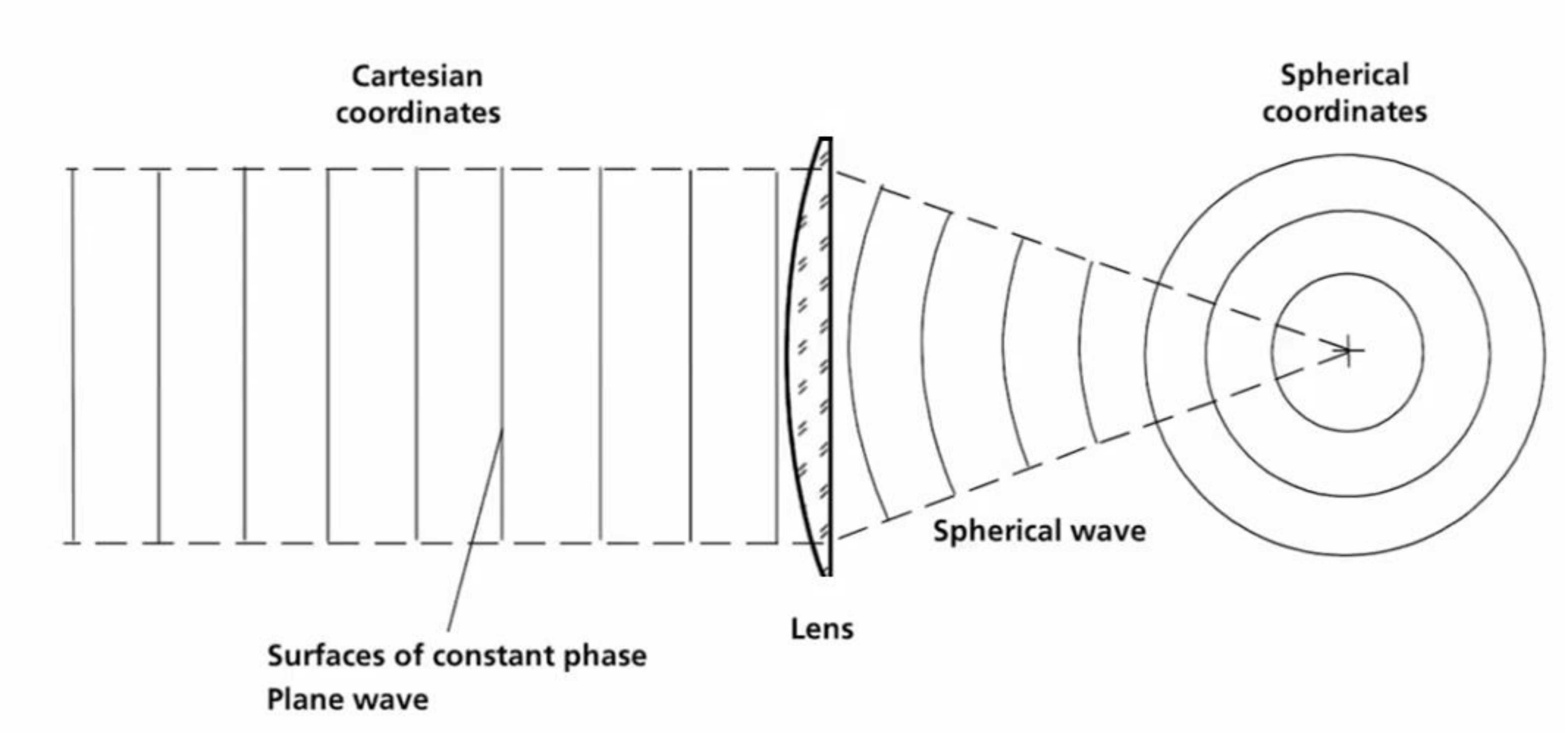
Most laser beams can be approximately described by Gaussian optics.
Gaussian optics is a type of wave optics and is very different from geometric optics.

Thereare many companies that provide laser source for the end users.
See: some laser resources

In this chapter we will investigate modelling coherent light generated by lasers.

GAUSSIAN BEAM DEFINITION

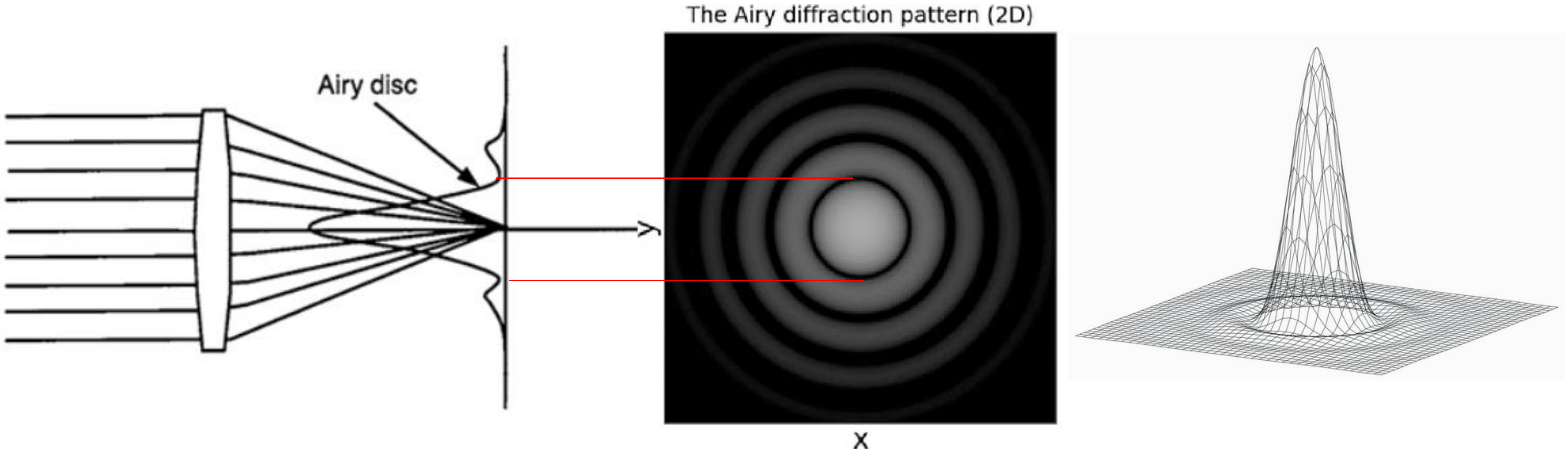
Plane Wave and Spherical Wave (Ideal Case)



See Page 4 (Wavefront and Ray) in Chapter 3 of the lecture notes.

Airy Disk

If we look through a telescope at a distant object, the light intensity across the entrance pupil and aperture stop is uniform, and this is generally known as a **top-hat** intensity profile or distribution.
if there is no aberration, a telescope objective focuses a point object into an Airy disk pattern, with the diameter determined by $D_A = 2r_A = 2.44\,\lambda\,(f/\#)$.



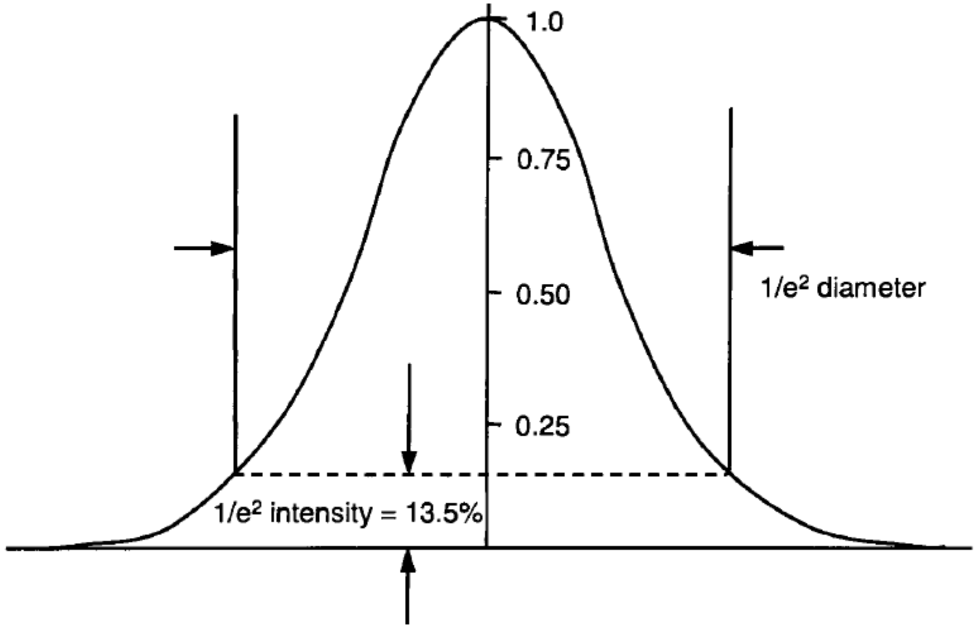
Airy disk is the smallest point to which a beam of light can be focused

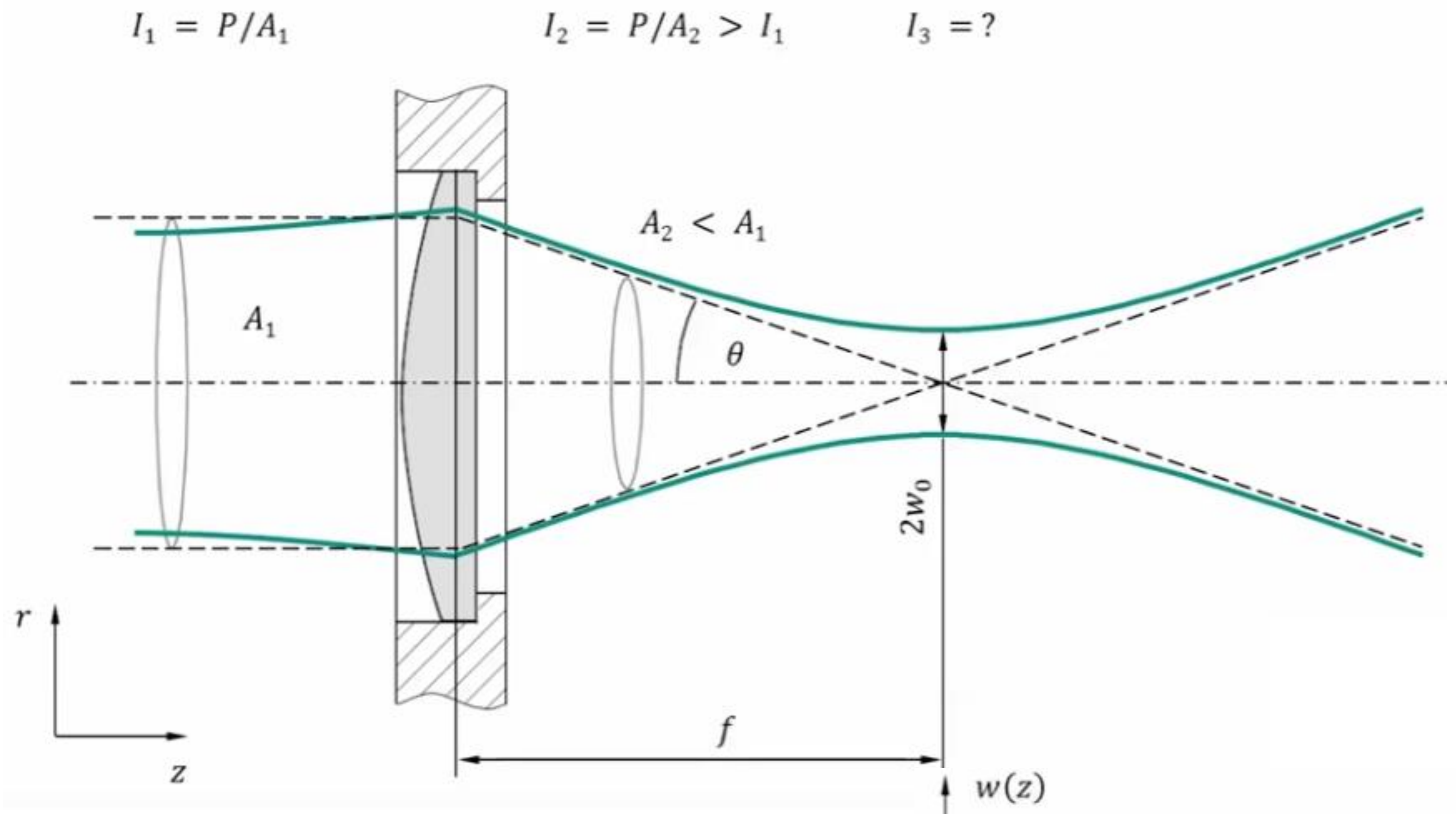
Gaussian Beam Intensity

Laser beams emitted from rotationally symmetric resonators, such as HeNe or YAG lasers with a TEM_{00} output, have an intensity distribution across the beam which is in the form of a gaussian intensity profile.

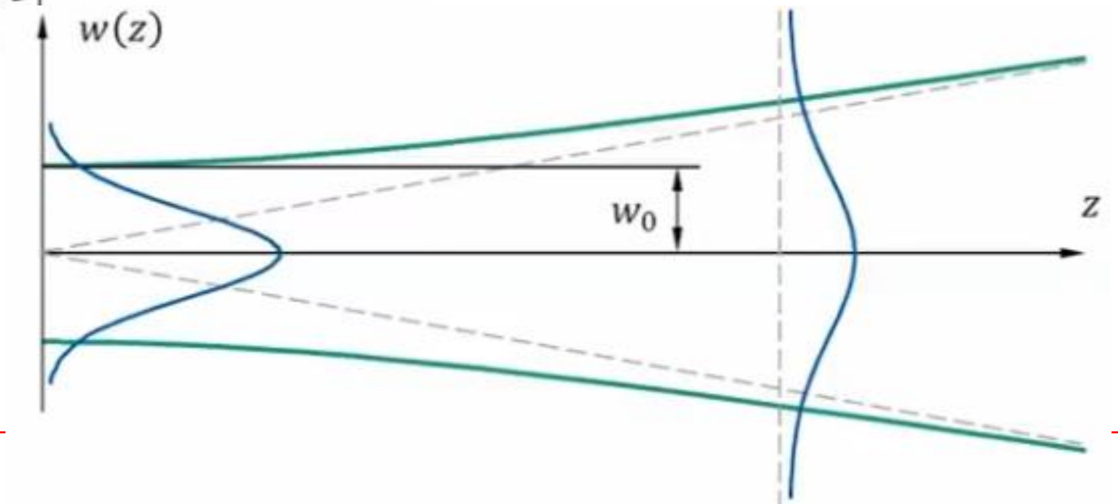
A gaussian intensity distribution in pupil space
will mathematically transform to a gaussian in image space.

The optical design of systems that facilitate laser beam propagation and focusing differs significantly from that of conventional non-laser systems, whether in the visible spectrum or another wavelength range.





P = power
A = area
I = irradiance
w_0 = waist



Light cannot be focused to an arbitrarily small spot due to its wave nature (diffraction).

Gaussian Beam

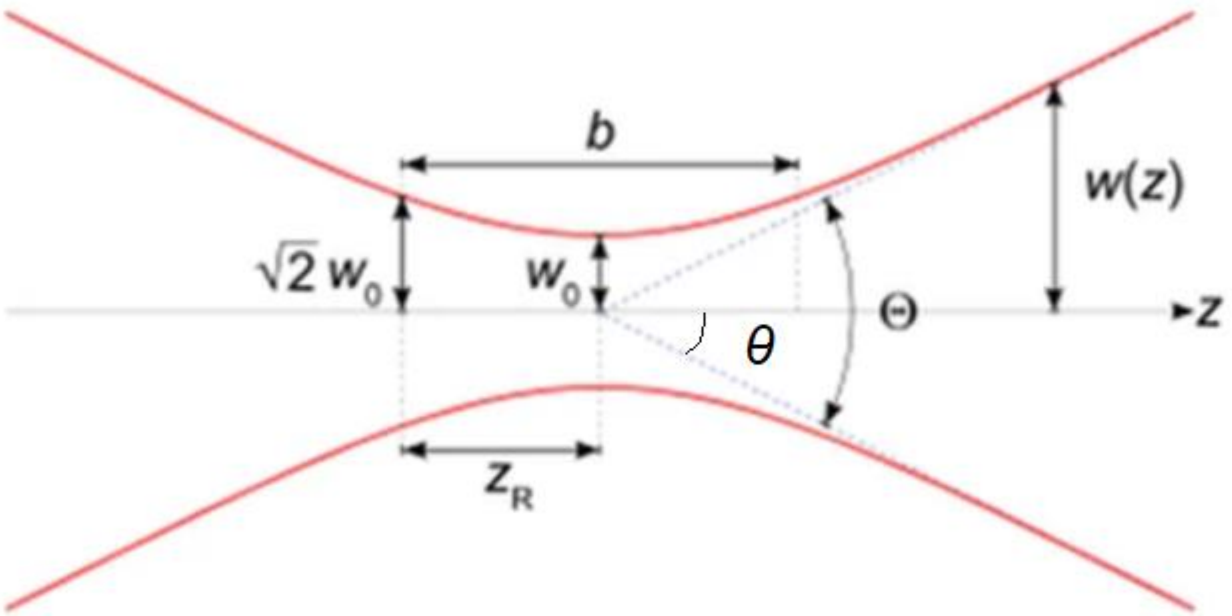
Consider an ideal Gaussian beam with waist w_0.

As shown in the schematic below

This Gaussian beam can be described

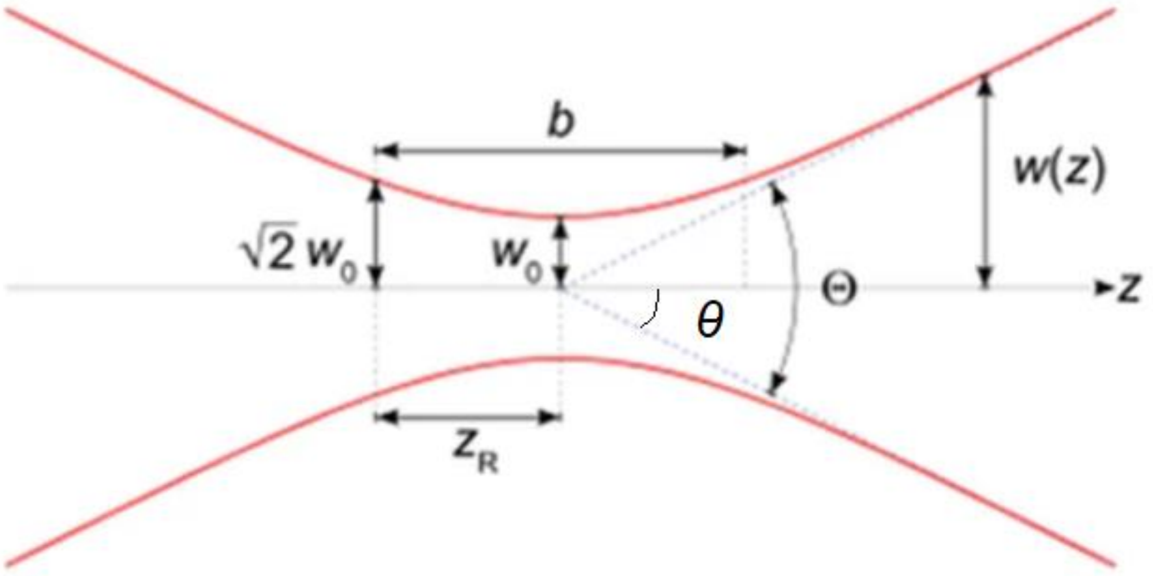
using any two of the three parameters:

- wavelength : λ
- beam waist : w_0
- divergence angle : $\Theta = 2\theta$



The beam size is a function of the distance from the waist. OpticStudio uses the half width to describe beam width. For a perfect gaussian shape, $1/e^2$ intensity radius of the beam as a function of z is given by

$$w(z) = w_0\left[1+\left(\frac{z}{z_R}\right)^2\right]^{1/2}$$



For large distances the beam size expands linearly.
The divergence angle θ of the beam is given by

$$\theta = \frac{\lambda}{\pi w_0} \qquad for\ \ z \gg z_R$$

z_R is the Rayleigh Range (aka depth of focus) of the beam

$$z_R = \frac{\pi w_0^2}{\lambda}$$ (at $z = z_R$ the beam radius is $w = \sqrt{2}w_0$)

The phase (wavefront) radius of curvature of the beam is

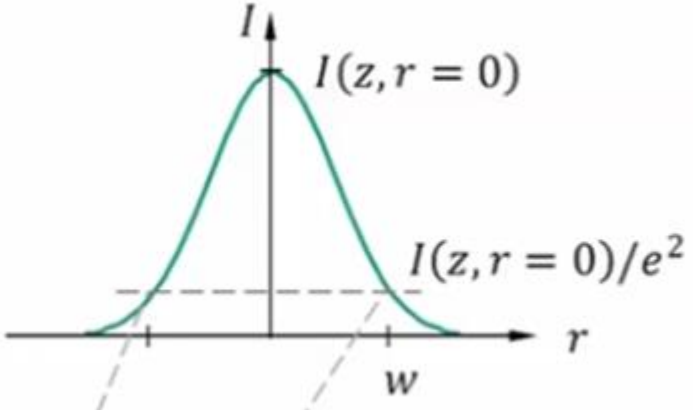
$$R(z) = z + \frac{z_R^2}{z}$$

This means that the radius is infinite at waist location z = 0, reaches its minimum at z = z_R, and asymptotically approaches infinity as z approaches infinity.

Gaussian Beam Characterization

Transversal intensity distribution

$$I(z,r) = \frac{2P}{\pi w(z)^2} \exp\left(-2\frac{r^2}{w(z)^2}\right)$$ **(irradiance)**

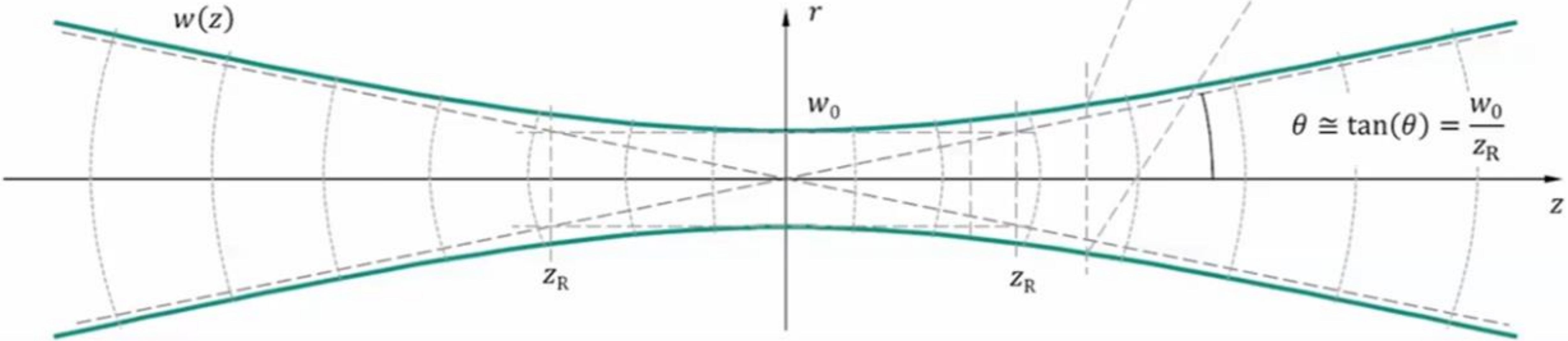


Beam radius in dependence upon the position (caustic)

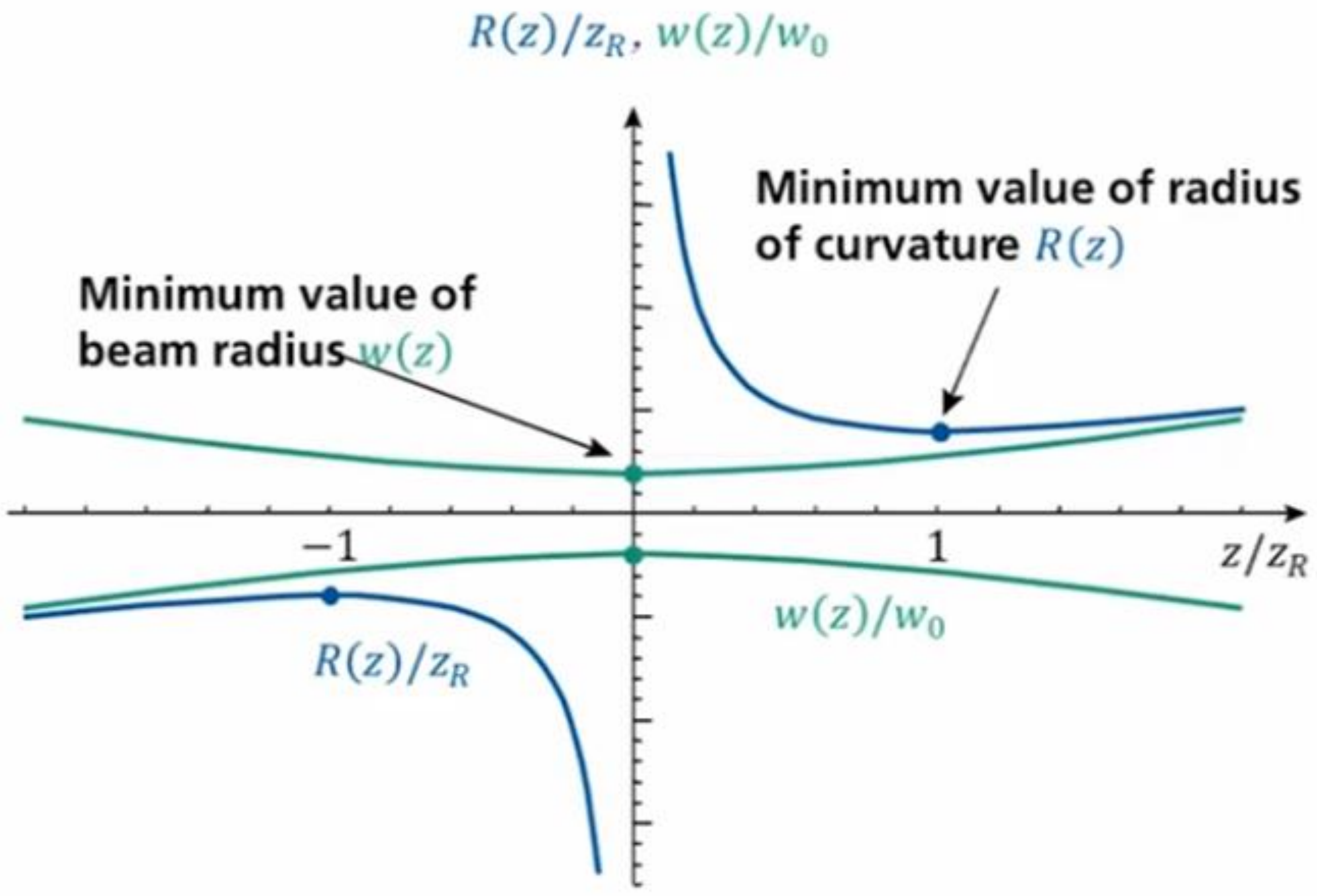
$$w(z) = w_0\sqrt{1 + \left(\frac{z}{z_R}\right)^2}$$

Rayleigh length

$$z_R = \frac{\pi w_0^2}{\lambda}$$



Radius of Curvature R(z) and beam Radius w(z)



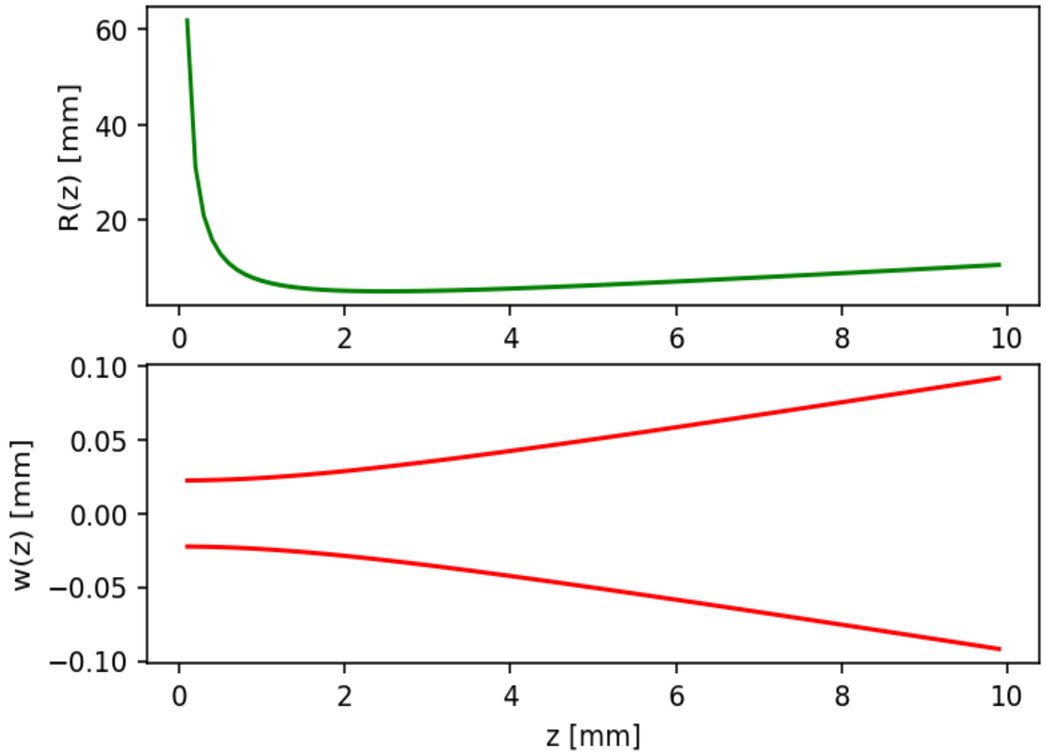
$$R(z) = z_R\left(\frac{z}{z_R} + \frac{z_R}{z}\right), \qquad \frac{R(z)}{z_R} \xrightarrow{z \gg z_R} \frac{z}{z_R}$$

$$w(z) = w_0\sqrt{1 + \left(\frac{z}{z_R}\right)^2}, \qquad \frac{w(z)}{w_0} \xrightarrow{z \gg z_R} \frac{z}{z_R}$$

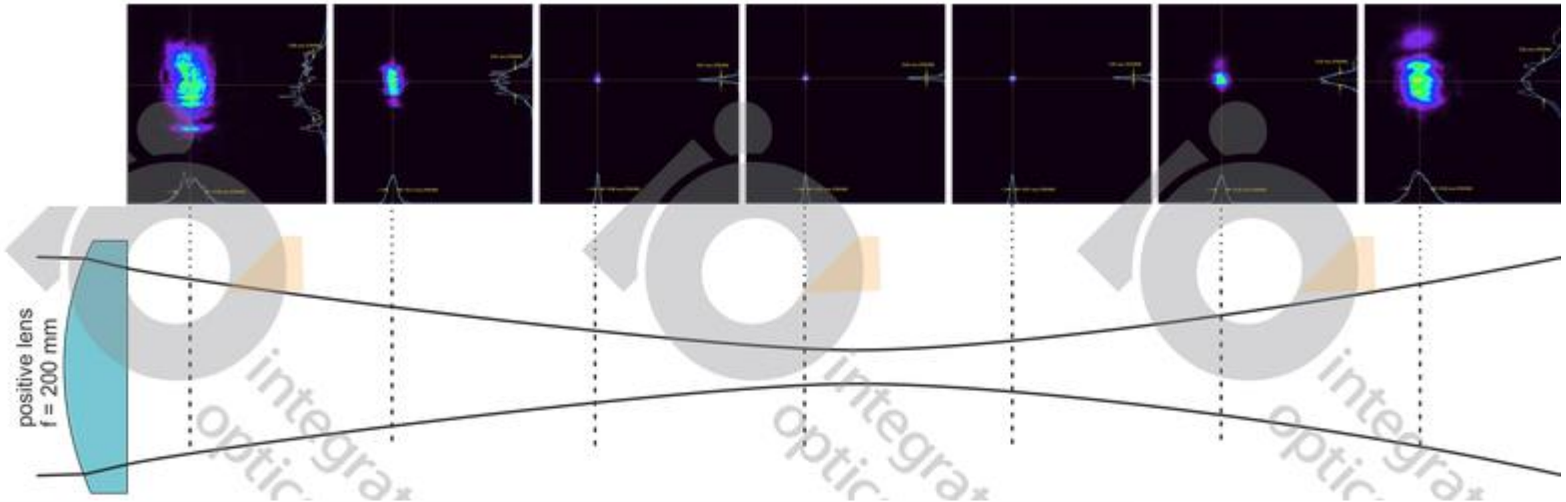
```python
# gbcalc.py
# Gaussian Beam Calculator
import math
import numpy as np
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt

# *** Inputs ***
theta = 9e-3          # beam divergence (rad)
L = 0.6328 * 1e-3     # wavelength (mm)

# *** Calculations ***
w0 = L / (math.pi*theta) # beam waist
zR = math.pi*w0**2 / L   # Rayleigh range
print('w0 = ', w0,' mm')
print('zR = ', zR,' mm')

# *** Plotting ***
z  = np.arange(0.1,10,0.1)
wz = w0*np.sqrt( 1+(z/zR)**2 )
Rz = z + zR**2/z
fig, (ax1, ax2) = plt.subplots(2)
ax1.plot(z,Rz,'g')
ax2.plot(z,wz,'r'); ax2.plot(z,-wz,'r')
ax1.set_ylabel('R(z) [mm]')
ax2.set_ylabel('w(z) [mm]'); ax2.set_xlabel('z [mm]')
```

Output of the program:

```
w0 = 0.02238 mm
zR = 2.48675 mm
```

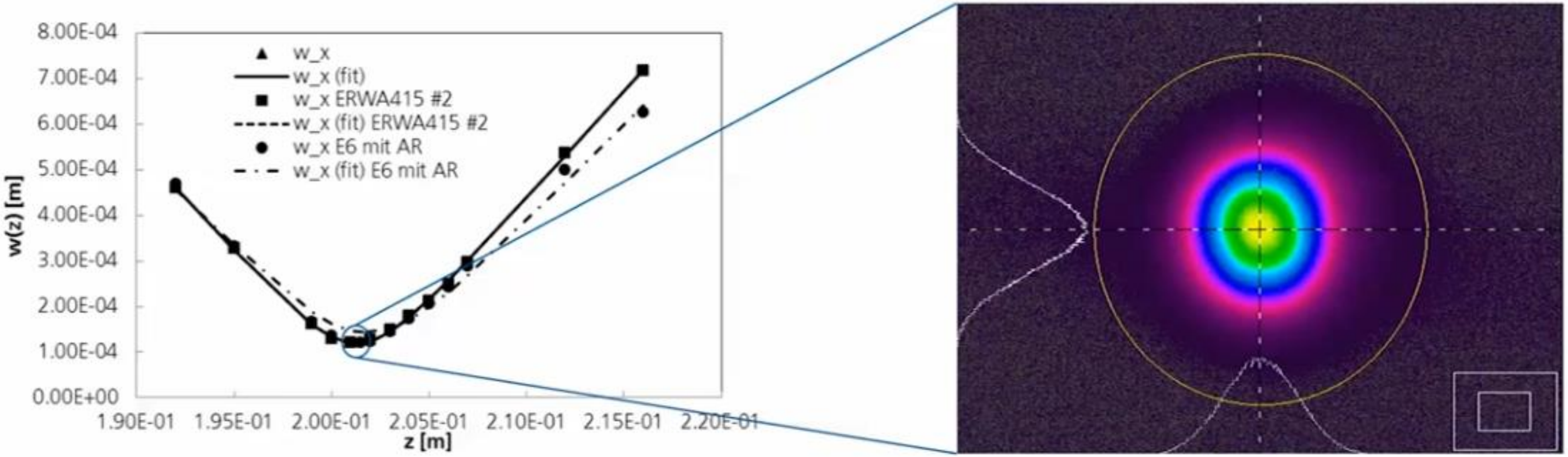


Measurement of Beam Quality



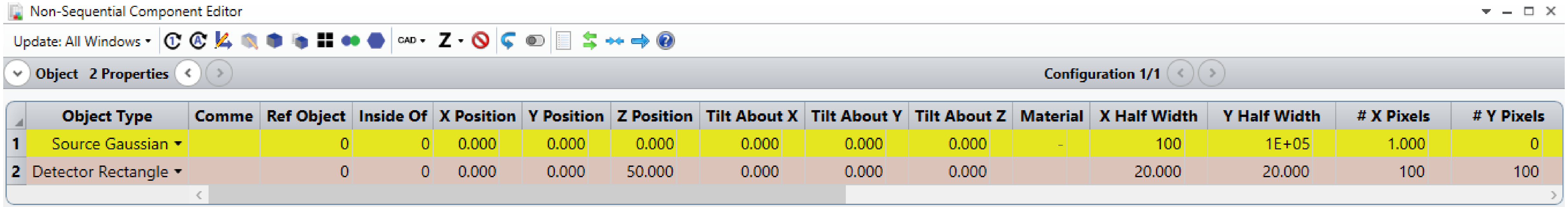
HeNe laser with wavelength $\lambda = 632.8\ \mathrm{nm}$

For real laser beams: $M^2 > 1$

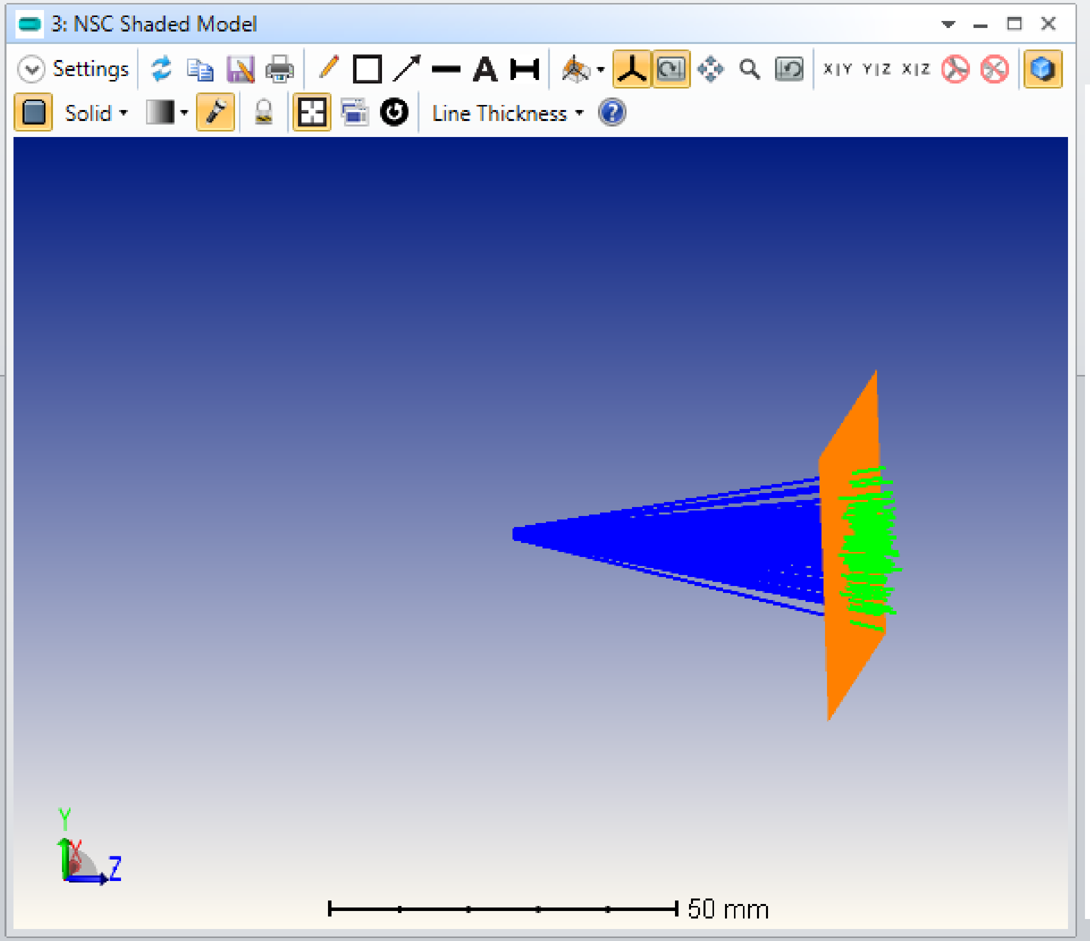


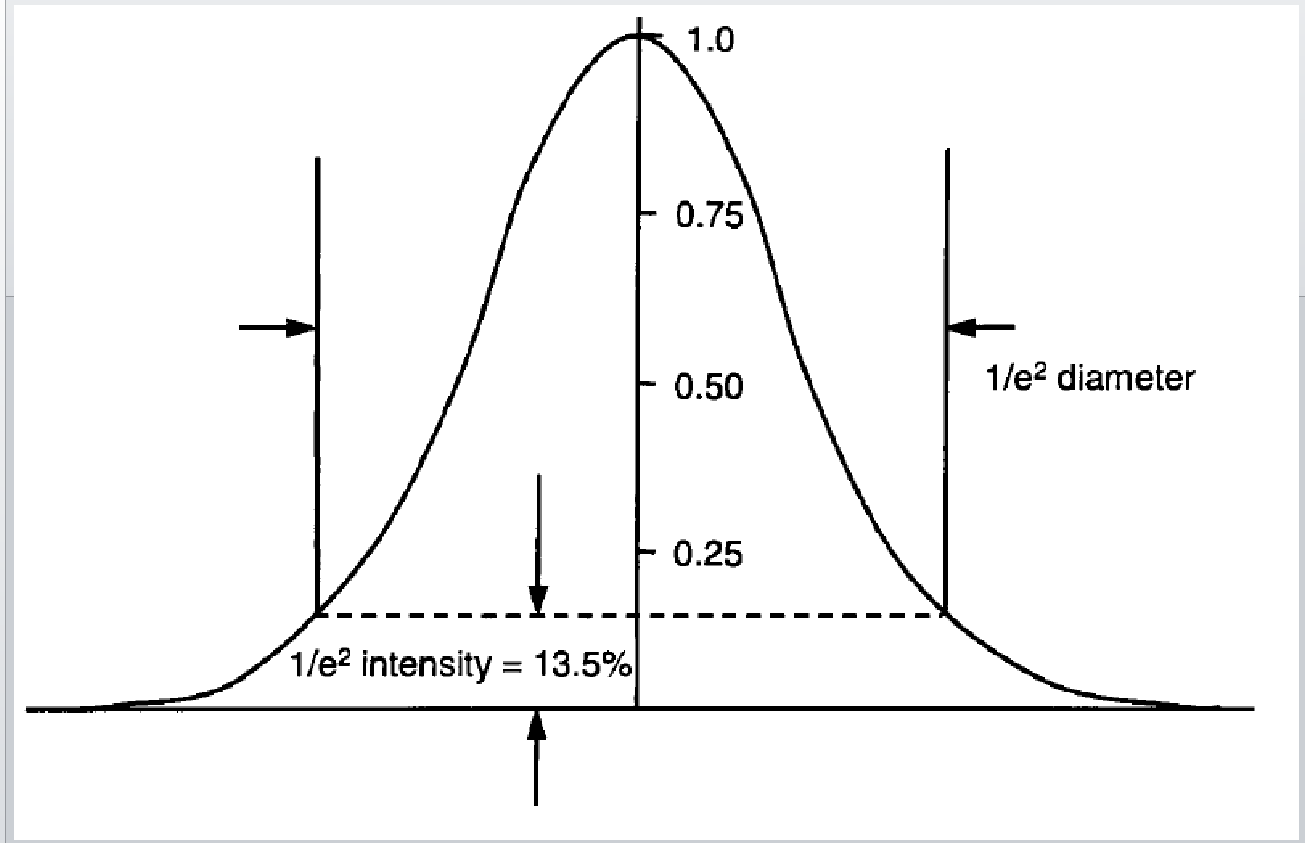
Measured caustic **Intensity profile**

Reminder: Source Gaussian in Zemax



	Object Type	Comme	Ref Object	Inside Of	X Position	Y Position	Z Position	Tilt About X	Tilt About Y	Tilt About Z	Material	X Half Width	Y Half Width	# X Pixels	# Y Pixels
1	Source Gaussian		0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	-	100	1E+05	1.000	0
2	Detector Rectangle		0	0	0.000	0.000	50.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		20.000	20.000	100	100





M^2 Factor

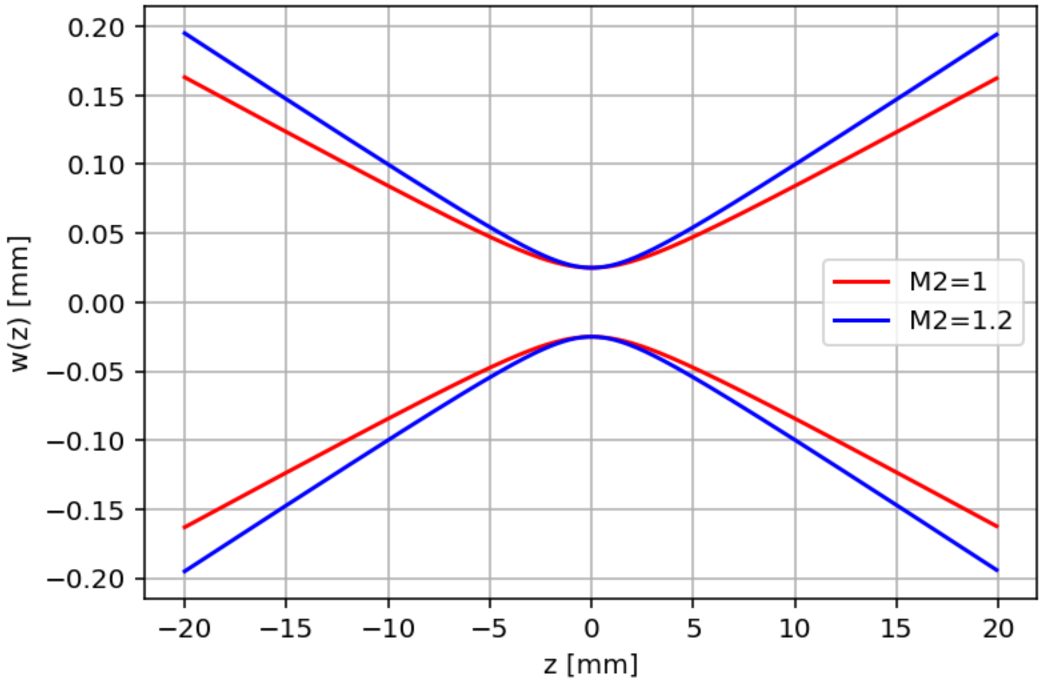
The Gaussian beam concept is so useful in photonics that a special quantity, called the M^2-factor. The M-square factor $M^2 \geq 1$ describes the deviation of a laser beam from a perfect Gaussian beam. In general, the propagation of a laser beam can be described by the following eqns:

$$w(z) = w_0\left[1+\left(\frac{M^2\lambda z}{\pi w_0^2}\right)^2\right]^{1/2} = w_0\left[1+\left(\frac{z}{z_R}\right)^2\right]^{1/2} \qquad z_R = \frac{\pi w_0^2}{M^2\lambda} \qquad I(r,z) = I_0(z)e^{-2r^2/w(z)^2}$$

- For a perfect Gaussian laser beam, $M^2 = 1$
- Most gas lasers have $M^2 \approx 1$
- Most solid-state lasers have an $M^2 = [1.1, 1.5]$
- Some lasers, such as laser diode piles and high-power YAG lasers, can have an M^2 value over 10.
- M-square can be measured using the relation:

$$M^2 = \frac{\pi w_0 \theta}{\lambda}$$

```python
# m2.py
# Gaussian Beam Comparator
import math
import numpy as np
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt

# Inputs
L  = 0.6328 * 1e-3  # wavelength (mm)
M2 = 1.2            # M-square factor
w0 = 0.025          # waist
# Calculations
zR1 = math.pi*w0**2 / (L)
zR2 = math.pi*w0**2 / (L*M2)
# plotting
z  = np.arange(-20,20,0.1)
wz1 = w0*np.sqrt( 1+(z/zR1)**2 )
wz2 = w0*np.sqrt( 1+(z/zR2)**2 )
plt.plot(z,wz1,'r')
plt.plot(z,wz2,'b')
plt.plot(z,-wz1,'r')
plt.plot(z,-wz2,'b')
plt.xlabel('z [mm]')
plt.ylabel('w(z) [mm]')
plt.legend(["M2=1", "M2=1.2"], loc="best")
plt.grid(True)
```



Example 1

Consider He-Ne laser beam at 633 nm with a spot size of 1 mm. For a Gaussian beam (M^2 =1) what is the divergence of the beam? What are the Rayleigh range and the beam width at 25 m?

$$2\theta = \frac{4\lambda}{\pi(2w_o)} = \frac{4(633 \times 10^{-9}\text{ m})}{\pi(1 \times 10^{-3}\text{ m})} = 8.06 \times 10^{-4}\text{ rad} = 0.046^\circ$$

$$z_o = \frac{\pi w_o^2}{\lambda} = \frac{\pi\left[(1 \times 10^{-3}\text{ m})/2\right]^2}{(633 \times 10^{-9}\text{ m})} = 1.24\text{ m}$$

$$2w = 2w_o\left[1 + (z/z_o)^2\right]^{1/2} = (1 \times 10^{-3}\text{ m})\left\{1 + \left[(25\text{ m})/(1.24\text{ m})\right]^2\right\}^{1/2}$$

$$= 0.0202\text{ m} \quad \text{or} \quad 20\text{ mm.}$$

What if $M^2 = 2$?

Exercise

Consider a 5 mW He-Ne laser that is operating at 633 nm, and has a spot size of 1 mm.

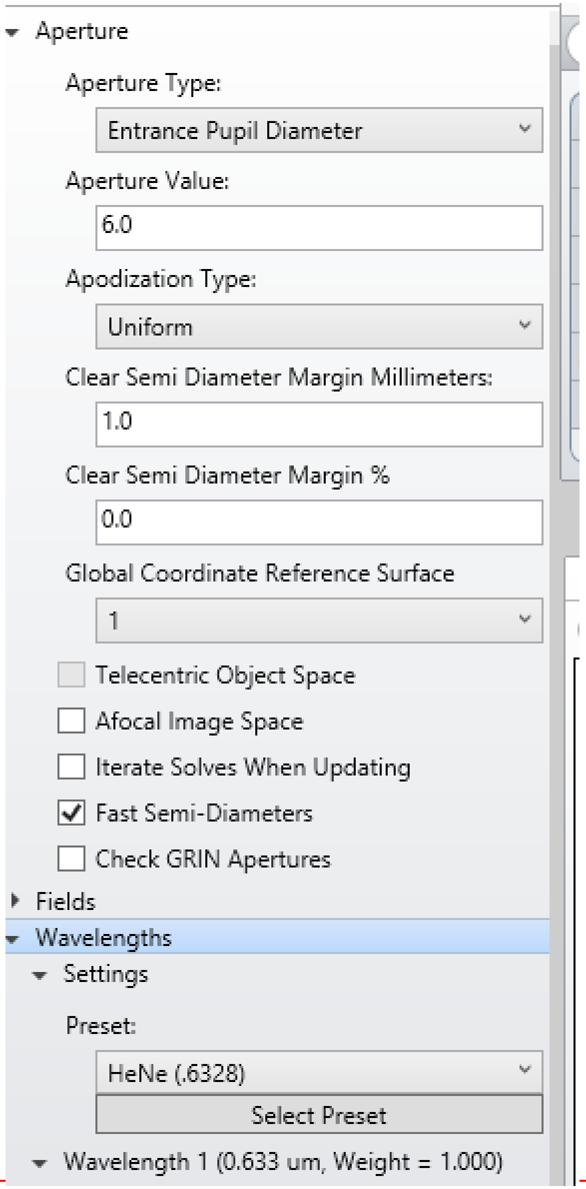
Find

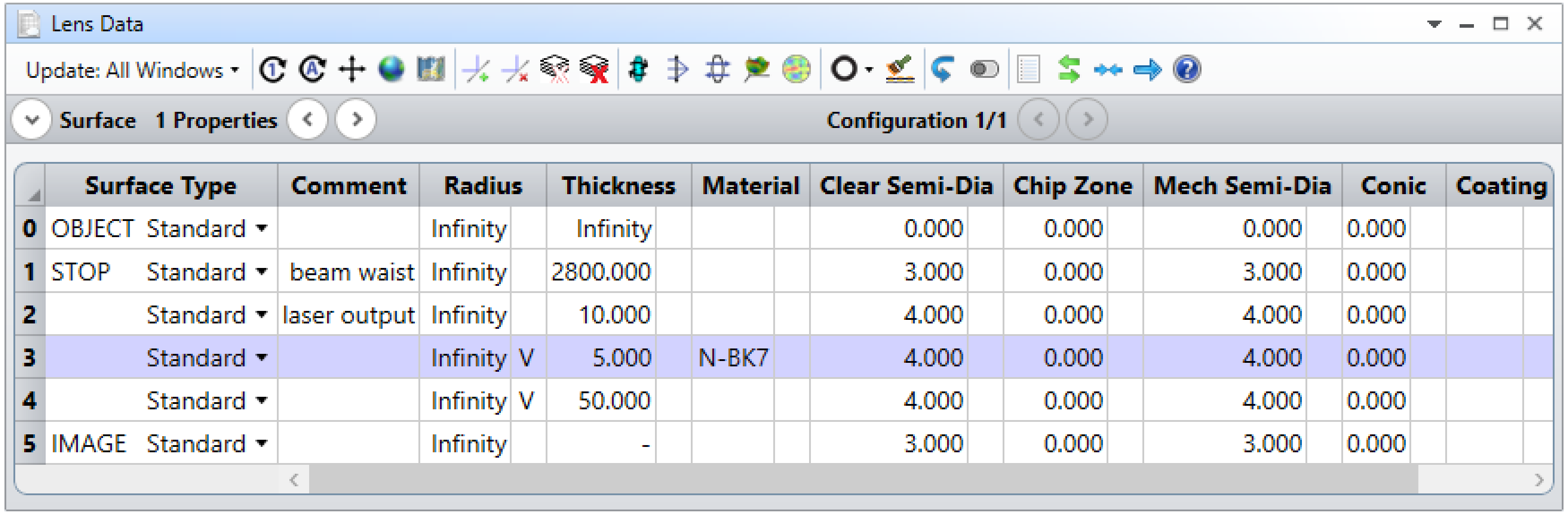
(a) the maximum irradiance of the beam [Ans: 1.27 W/cm^2]

(b) the axial (maximum) irradiance at 25 m from the laser [Ans: 3.13 mW/cm^2].

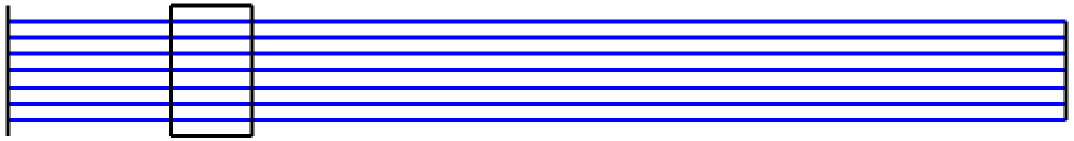
PHYSICAL OPTICS
IN ZEMAX

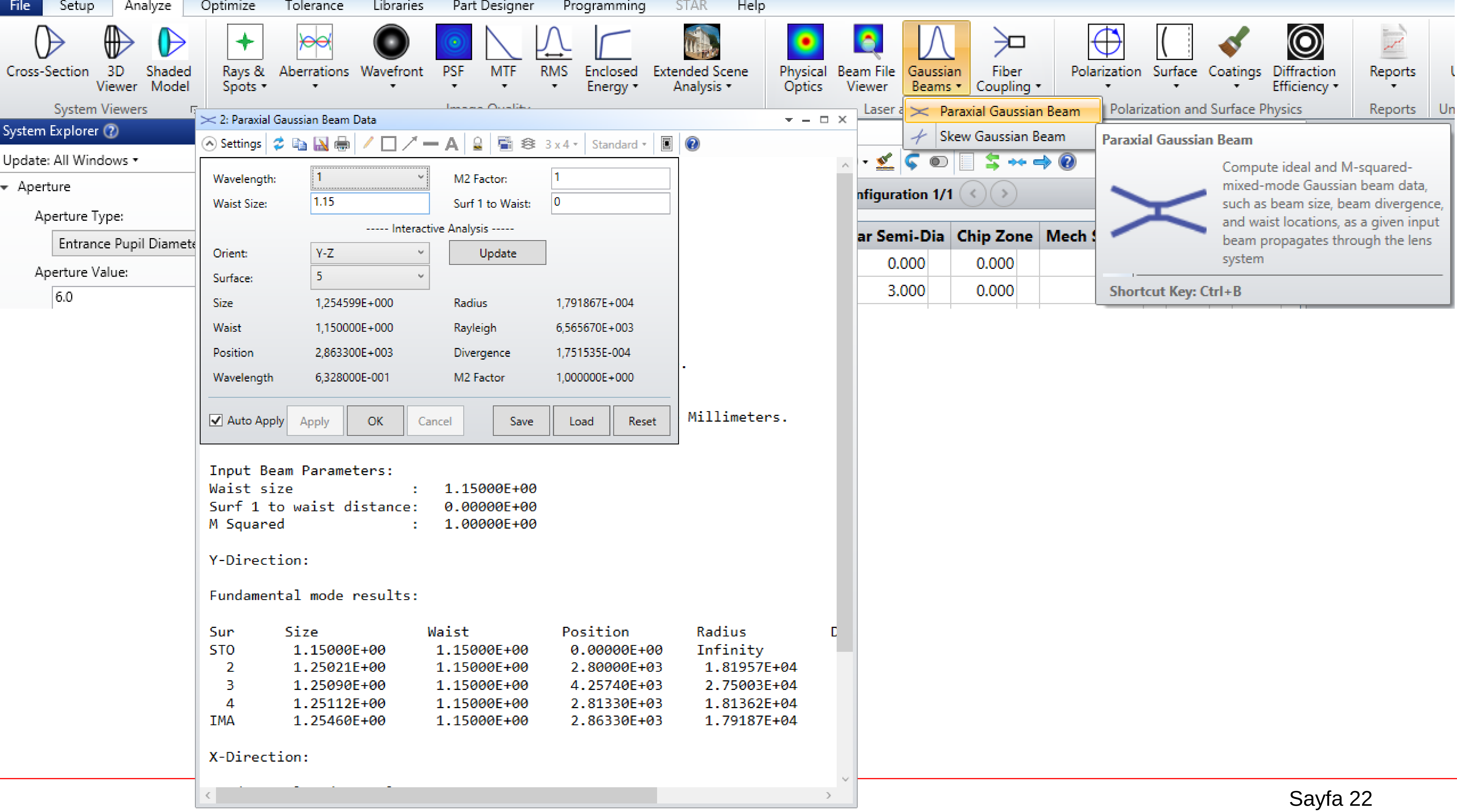
Example2: Paraxial (Abberation Free) Gaussian Beam Propagation





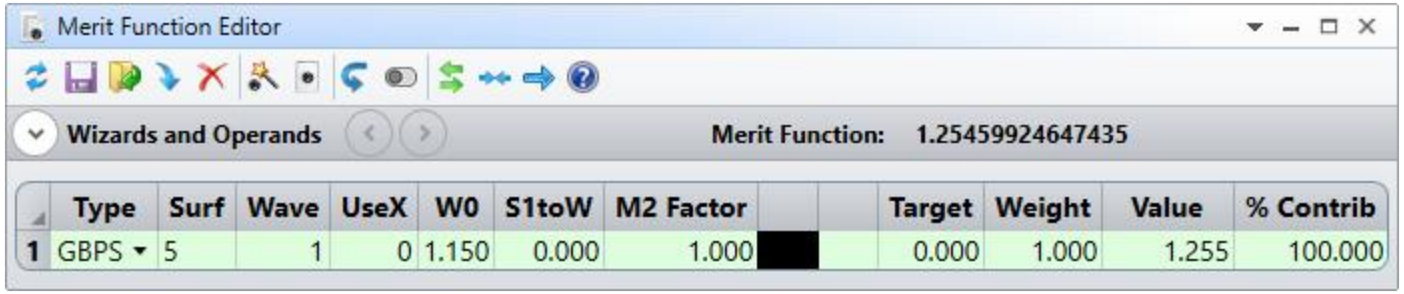
		Surface Type	Comment	Radius	Thickness	Material	Clear Semi-Dia	Chip Zone	Mech Semi-Dia	Conic	Coating
0	OBJECT	Standard		Infinity	Infinity		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
1	STOP	Standard	beam waist	Infinity	2800.000		3.000	0.000	3.000	0.000	
2		Standard	laser output	Infinity	10.000		4.000	0.000	4.000	0.000	
3		Standard		Infinity V	5.000	N-BK7	4.000	0.000	4.000	0.000	
4		Standard		Infinity V	50.000		4.000	0.000	4.000	0.000	
5	IMAGE	Standard		Infinity	-		3.000	0.000	3.000	0.000	




File Setup Analyze Optimize Tolerance Libraries Part Designer Programming STAR Help
Cross-Section
3D Viewer
Shaded Model
Rays & Spots
Aberrations
Wavefront
PSF
MTF
RMS
Enclosed Energy
Extended Scene Analysis
Physical Optics
Beam File Viewer
Gaussian Beams
Fiber Coupling
Polarization
Surface
Coatings
Diffraction Efficiency
Reports
System Viewers
Polarization and Surface Physics
Paraxial Gaussian Beam
Skew Gaussian Beam
Paraxial Gaussian Beam
Compute ideal and M-squared-mixed-mode Gaussian beam data, such as beam size, beam divergence, and waist locations, as a given input beam propagates through the lens system
Shortcut Key: Ctrl+B
System Explorer
Update: All Windows
Aperture
Aperture Type:
Entrance Pupil Diamete
Aperture Value:
6.0
2: Paraxial Gaussian Beam Data
Settings
3 x 4
Standard
Wavelength: 1
M2 Factor: 1
Waist Size: 1.15
Surf 1 to Waist: 0
----- Interactive Analysis -----
Orient: Y-Z
Update
Surface: 5
Size 1,254599E+000
Radius 1,791867E+004
Waist 1,150000E+000
Rayleigh 6,565670E+003
Position 2,863300E+003
Divergence 1,751535E-004
Wavelength 6,328000E-001
M2 Factor 1,000000E+000
Auto Apply
Apply
OK
Cancel
Save
Load
Reset
nfiguration 1/1
ar Semi-Dia
Chip Zone
Mech
0.000
0.000
3.000
0.000
Millimeters.
Input Beam Parameters:
Waist size : 1.15000E+00
Surf 1 to waist distance: 0.00000E+00
M Squared : 1.00000E+00
Y-Direction:
Fundamental mode results:
Sur Size Waist Position Radius
STO 1.15000E+00 1.15000E+00 0.00000E+00 Infinity
2 1.25021E+00 1.15000E+00 2.80000E+03 1.81957E+04
3 1.25090E+00 1.15000E+00 4.25740E+03 2.75003E+04
4 1.25112E+00 1.15000E+00 2.81330E+03 1.81362E+04
IMA 1.25460E+00 1.15000E+00 2.86330E+03 1.79187E+04
X-Direction:

Optimize the lens to get minimum spot size.

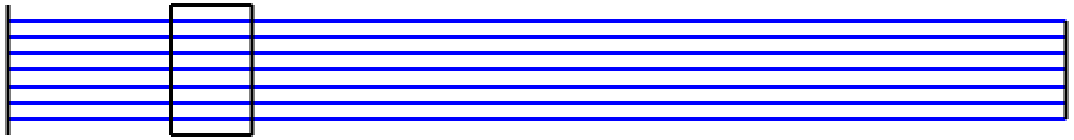
Before optimization:



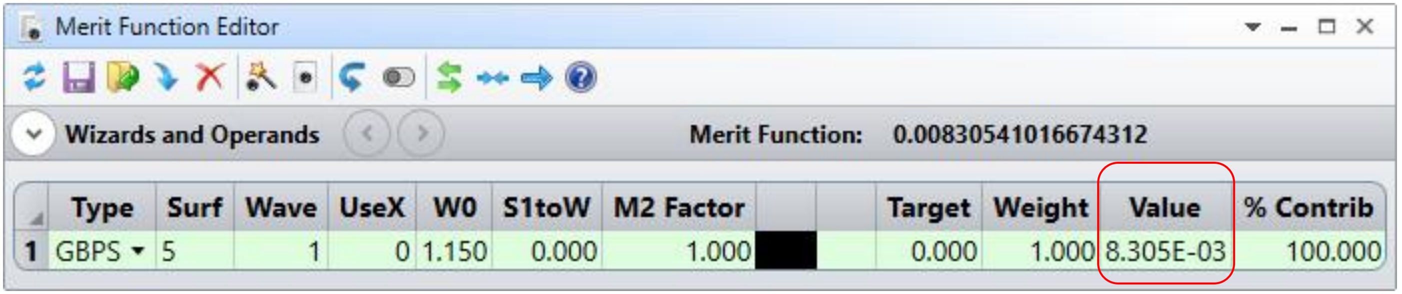
Merit Function Editor

Wizards and Operands — Merit Function: 1.25459924647435

	Type	Surf	Wave	UseX	W0	S1toW	M2 Factor			Target	Weight	Value	% Contrib
1	GBPS	5	1	0	1.150	0.000	1.000			0.000	1.000	1.255	100.000



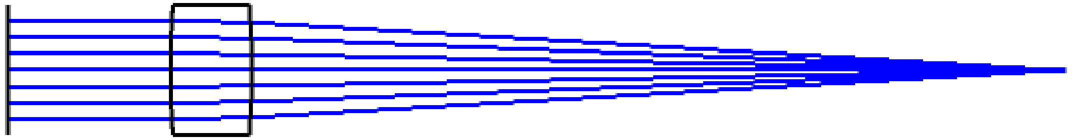
After optimization:



Merit Function Editor

Wizards and Operands — Merit Function: 0.00830541016674312

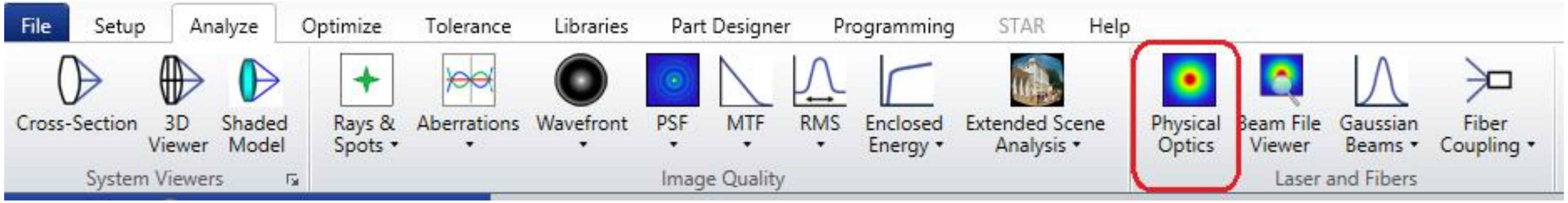
	Type	Surf	Wave	UseX	W0	S1toW	M2 Factor			Target	Weight	Value	% Contrib
1	GBPS	5	1	0	1.150	0.000	1.000			0.000	1.000	8.305E-03	100.000

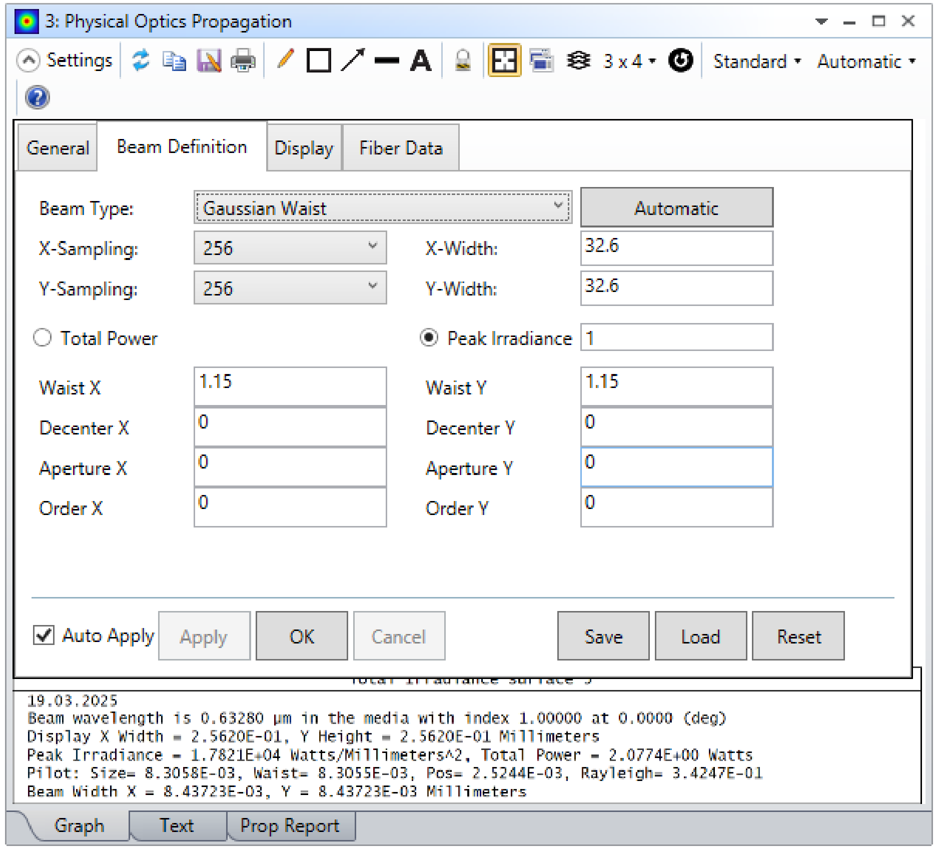


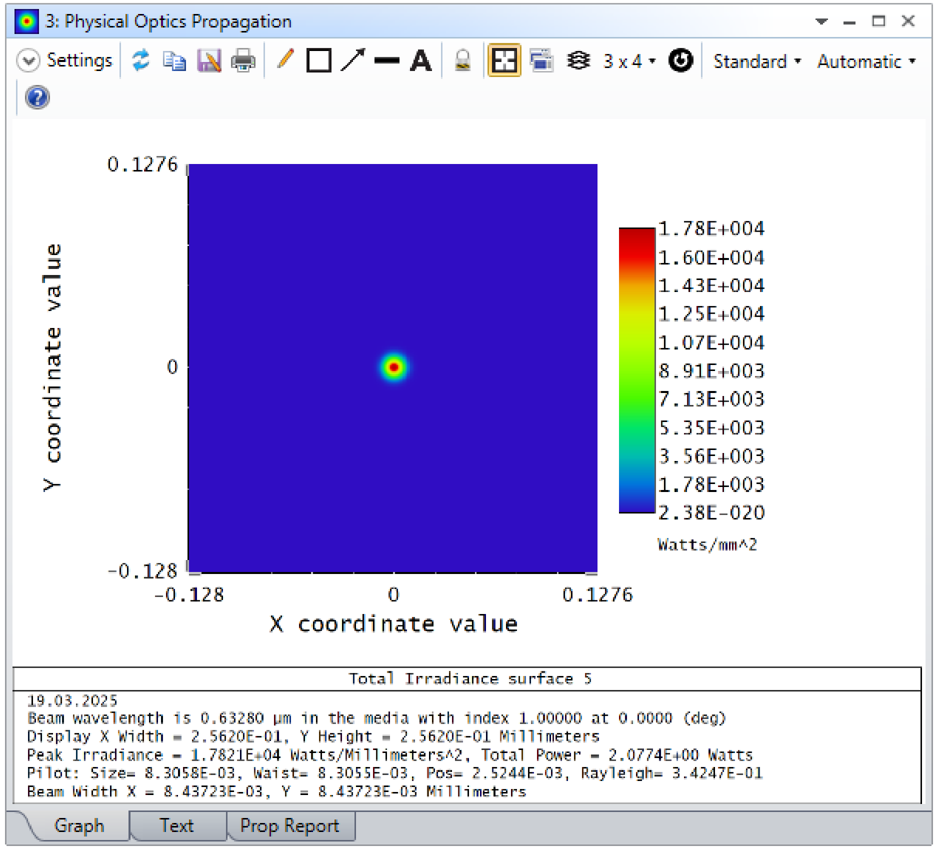
Physical Optics

We examine

the same example …







Re-optimize to obtain minimum M^2 Value.

to get value of M^2

Before optimization

Merit Function Editor

Wizards and Operands — Merit Function: 0.499586685414209

	Type	Surf	Wave	Field	Data	Xtr1	Xtr2			Target	Weight	Value	% Contrib
1	POPD	5	0	0	25	0.000	0.000			1.000	5.000	1.547	99.995
2	GBPS	5	1	0	1.150	0.000	1.000			0.000	1.000	8.305E-03	4.606E-03

After optimization

Merit Function Editor

Wizards and Operands — Merit Function: 0.110688181777744

	Type	Surf	Wave	Field	Data	Xtr1	Xtr2			Target	Weight	Value	% Contrib
1	POPD	5	0	0	25	0.000	0.000			1.000	5.000	1.085	48.860
2	GBPS	5	1	0	1.150	0.000	1.000			0.000	1.000	0.194	51.140

Example 3: Zemax Examples

Investigate the examples at:

C:\<Zemax>\Samples\Non-sequential\Coherence Interference and Diffraction

DIODE LASERS
IN ZEMAX

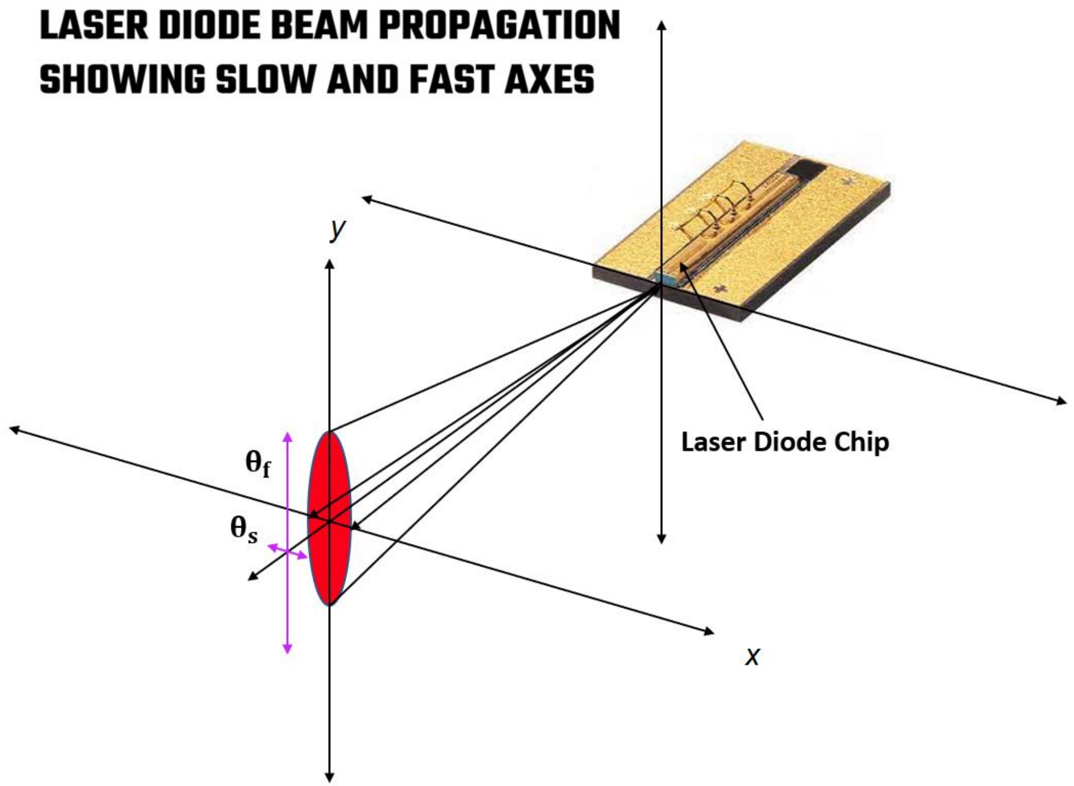
Defining Diode Laser Source

Consider a diode laser given right:

This is the product

OPD000082 FL-COC11-10-808

laser from focuslight



Optical Data[2]	Unit	Value
Centroid Wavelength	nm	808
Wavelength Tolerance	nm	± 3
Emitter Width	μm	200
Output Power[3]	W	10
Spectral Width FWHM	nm	≤ 3
Spectral Width 90% Energy	nm	≤ 5
Fast Axis Divergence (FWHM)	°	~ 30
Slow Axis Divergence (FWHM)	°	8
Polarization Mode	-	TE
Wavelength Temp. Coefficient	nm / °C	~ 0.28
Electrical Data [2]		
Operation Current	A	≤ 11.8
Threshold Current	A	≤ 1.8
Operating Voltage	V	≤ 2.2
Slope Efficiency	W / A	≥ 1
Power Conversion Efficiency	%	≥ 44
Thermal Data		
Operating Temperature	°C	15 ~ 30
Storage Temperature [4]	°C	-40 ~ 55
Recommended Heatsink Capacity	W	≥ 20

Defining Diode Laser Source

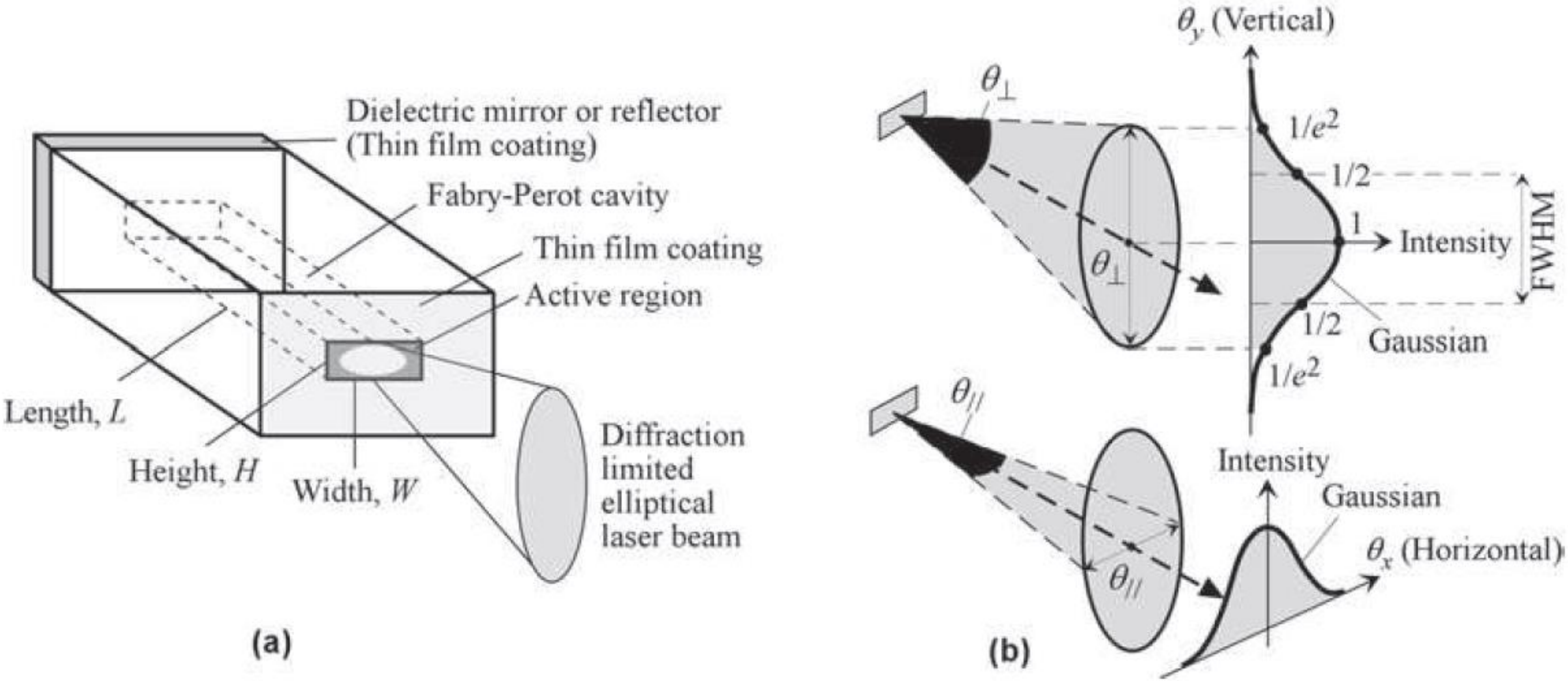


FIGURE 4.42 (a) The laser cavity definitions and the output laser beam characteristics. (b) Laser diode output beam astigmatism. The beam is elliptical, and is characterized by two angles, $\theta_{\perp}$ and $\theta_{//}$.

Example 4

Implement the laser diode given right in Zemax. Place **Source Diode** at z = 0. Also, include a rectangular detector of suitable size at z = 100 mm. Investigate far field beam shape of the laser.

Wavelength = 808 nm

X-divergence = 8 * 0.849 = 6.792° (Slow Axis)

Y-divergence = 30 * 0.849 = 25.47° (Fast Axis)

X-SuperGauss = Y-SuperGauss = 1

X-width = 200/2 = 100 μm = 0.1 mm

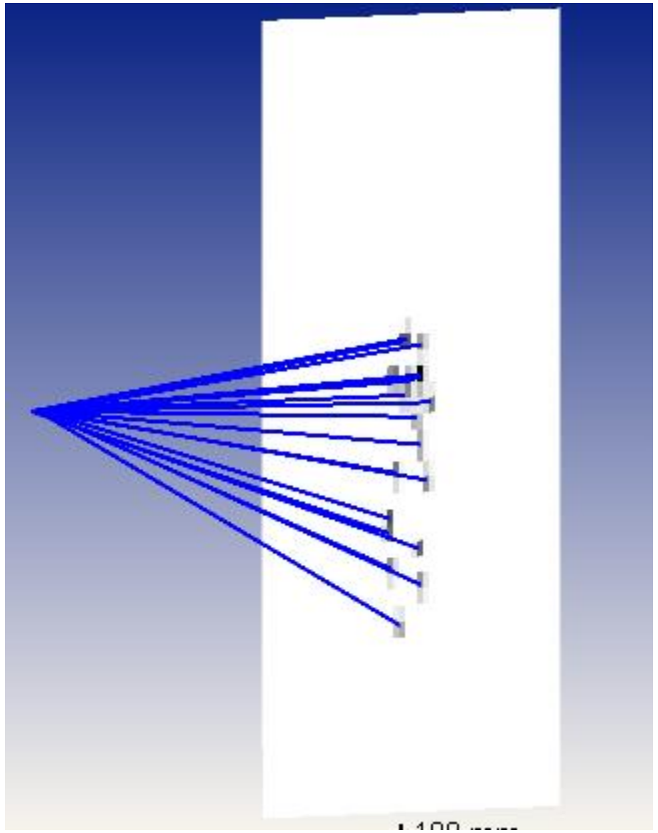
Y-width = 2/2 = 1 μm = 0.001 mm

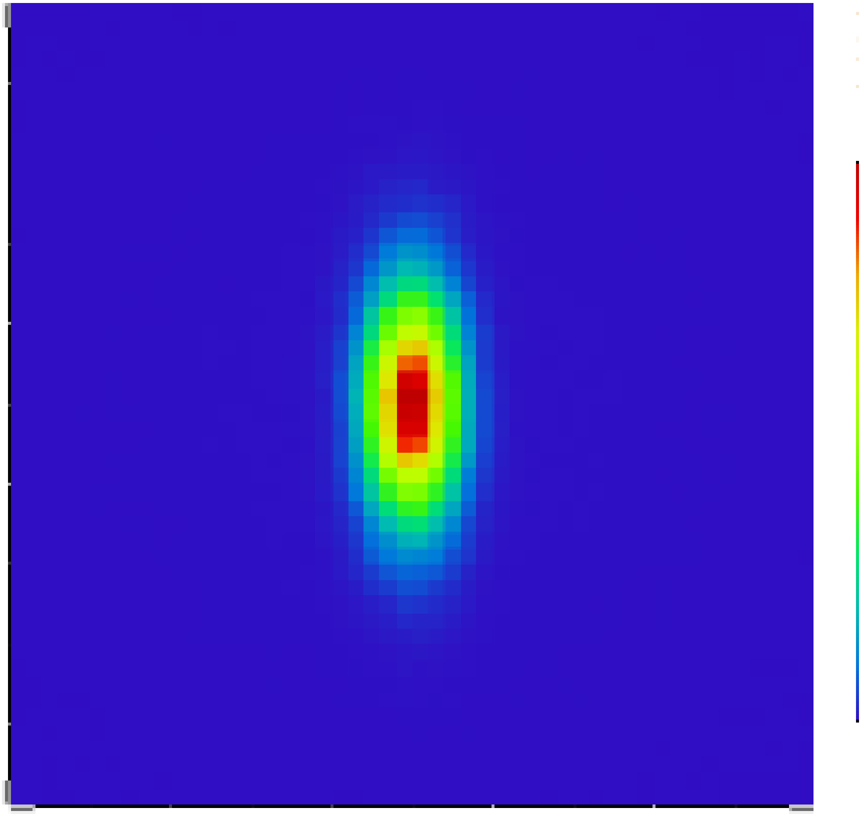
X-sigma = 1 mm

Y-sigma = 1 mm

X-sigma Hx = X-sigma Hy = 1 mm

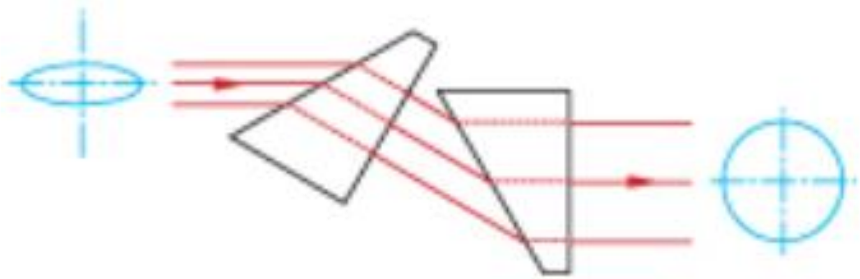
Optical Data[2]	Unit	Value
Centroid Wavelength	nm	808
Wavelength Tolerance	nm	± 3
Emitter Width	μm	200
Output Power[3]	W	10
Spectral Width FWHM	nm	≤ 3
Spectral Width 90% Energy	nm	≤ 5
Fast Axis Divergence (FWHM)	°	~ 30
Slow Axis Divergence (FWHM)	°	8
Polarization Mode	-	TE
Wavelength Temp. Coefficient	nm / °C	~ 0.28
Electrical Data [2]		
Operation Current	A	≤ 11.8
Threshold Current	A	≤ 1.8
Operating Voltage	V	≤ 2.2
Slope Efficiency	W / A	≥ 1
Power Conversion Efficiency	%	≥ 44
Thermal Data		
Operating Temperature	°C	15 ~ 30
Storage Temperature [4]	°C	-40 ~ 55
Recommended Heatsink Capacity	W	≥ 20

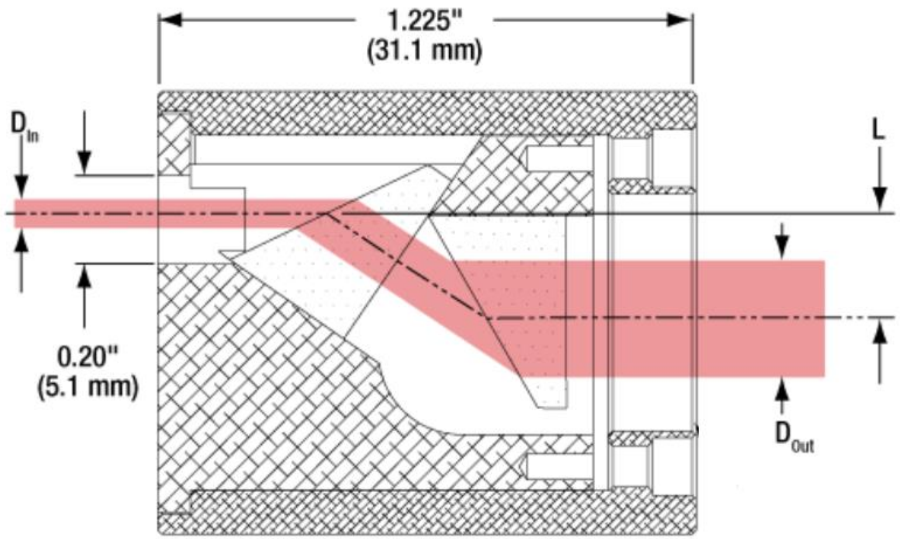


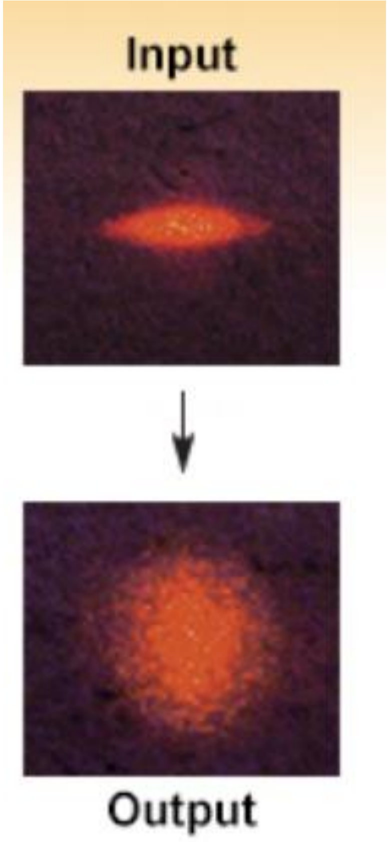


Anamorphic Prism Pairs

They transform elliptical laser diode beams into nearly circular beams.







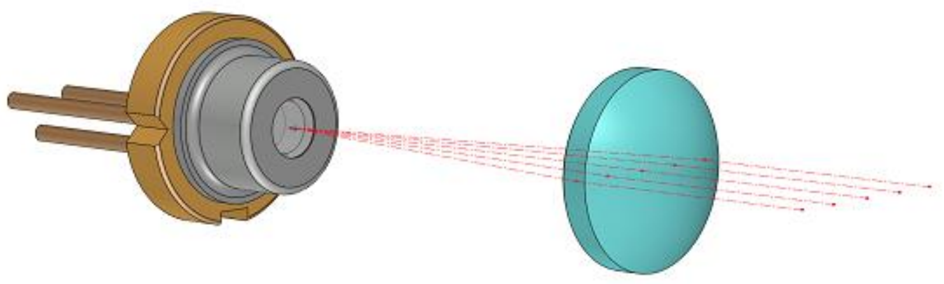
https://www.thorlabs.com/newgrouppage9.cfm?objectgroup_id=149

Laser Beam Collimation

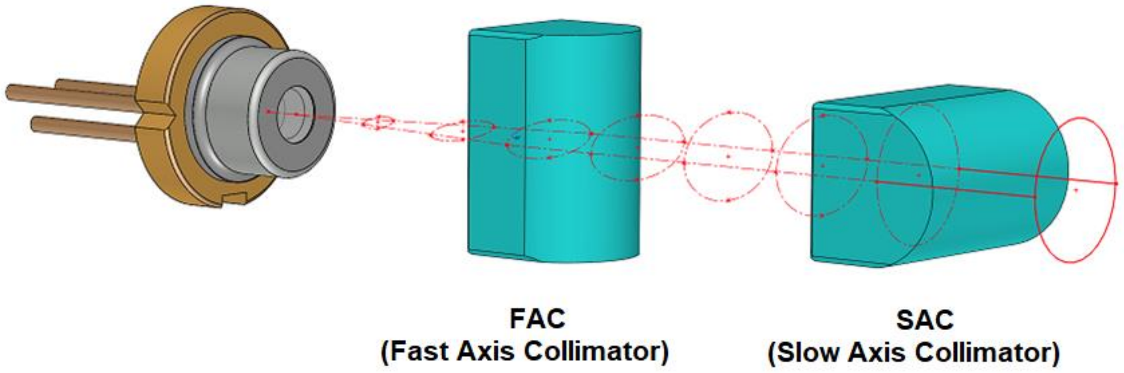
A collimator is a device which narrows a beam of particles or waves.

Any laser beam will spread as it propagates.

If beam circular it can be collimated by a single asherical lens.

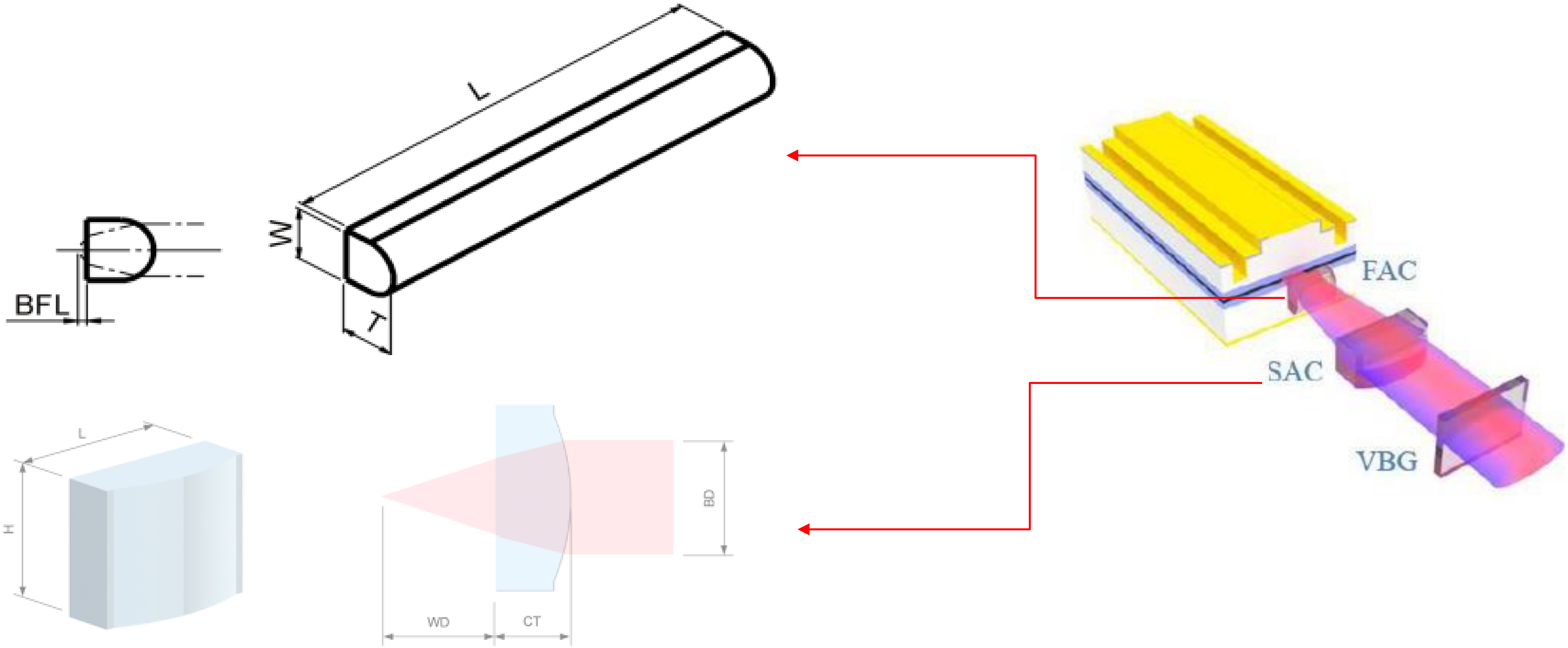


Diode lasers can be collimated by a pair of cylindrical lenses.

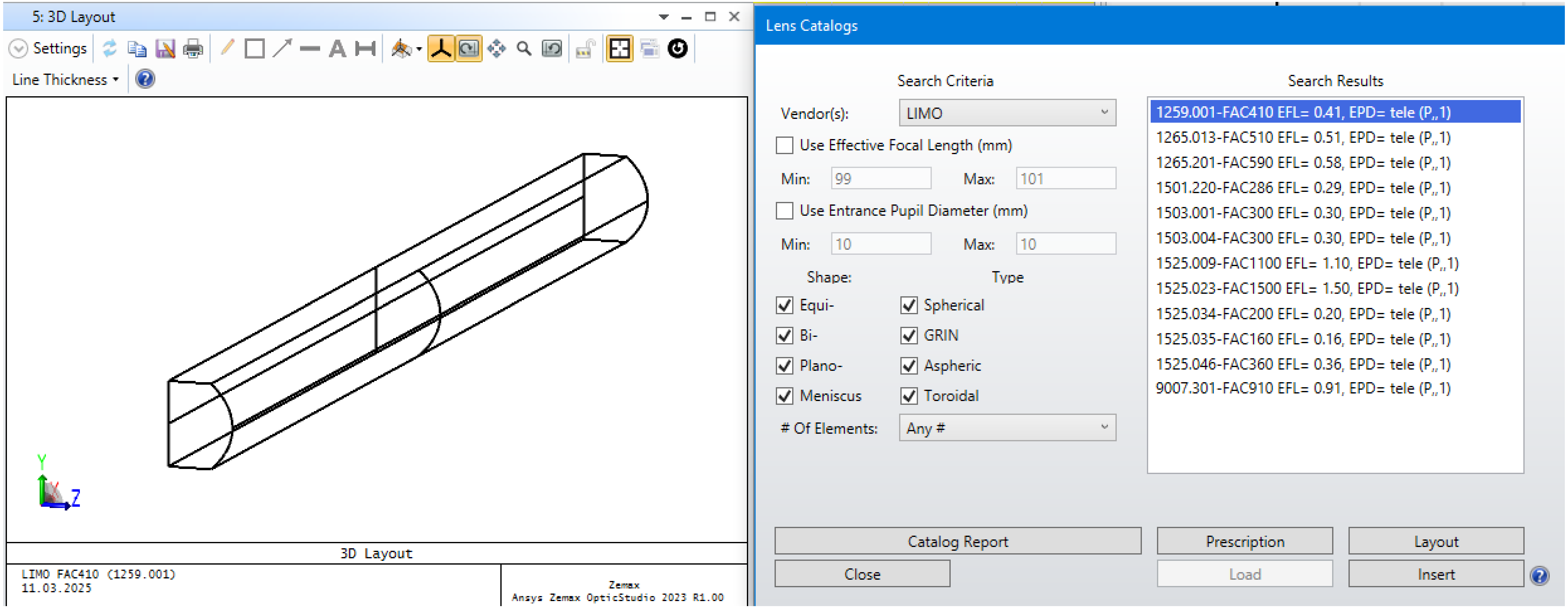


FAC / SAC Design

Note that in general the cylindrical lenses can be modelled by **Toroidal Lens** object as NSC.



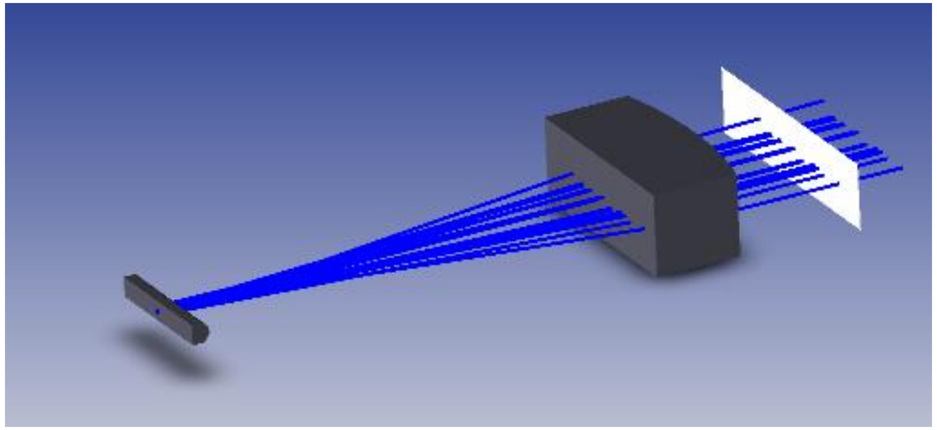
I will mention about FAC lenses in Lens Catalog for vendor from **LIMO**.



Plano convex FAC Design Parameters:

Inputs: W, T, L, λ, Glass, BFL, Fast axis divergenge

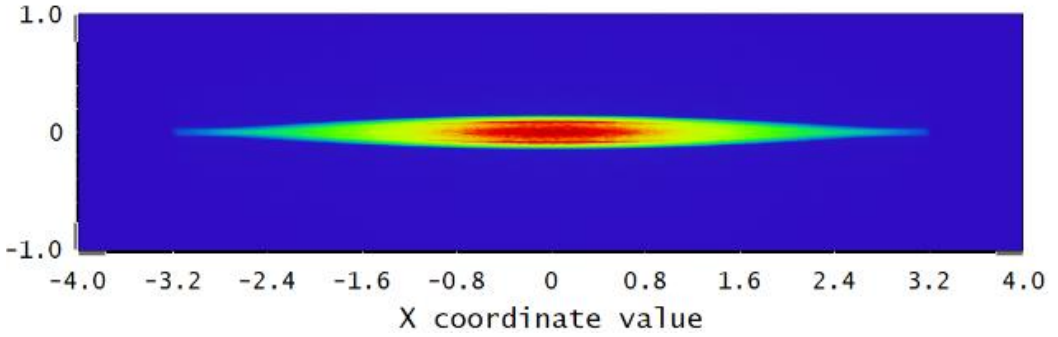
Outputs for convex side: R, k, A4, A6, A8



Plano convex SAC Design Parameters:

Inputs: W, T, L, λ, Glass, BFL, Slow axis Divergenge

Outputs for convex side: R, k, A4, A6, A8



where

R = Radius of curvature

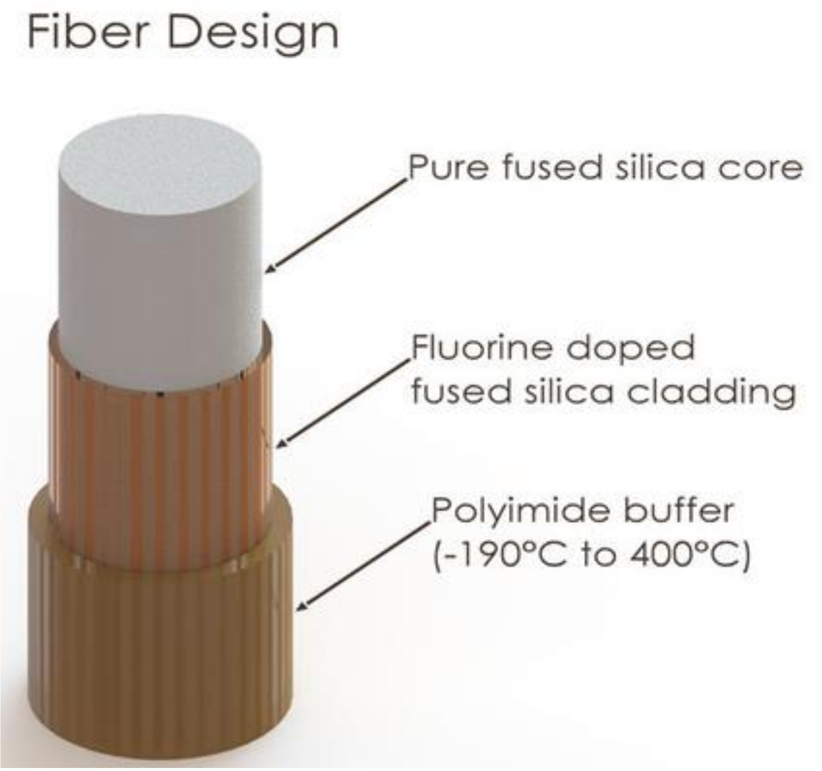
k = conic constant

A4, A6, A8 = aspheric constants

Glass = SILICA, S-TIH53, S-NPH3, N-BK7, H-K9L, D-PK3, D-K59

Optical Fiber

An optical fiber, is a flexible glass or plastic fiber that can transmit light.

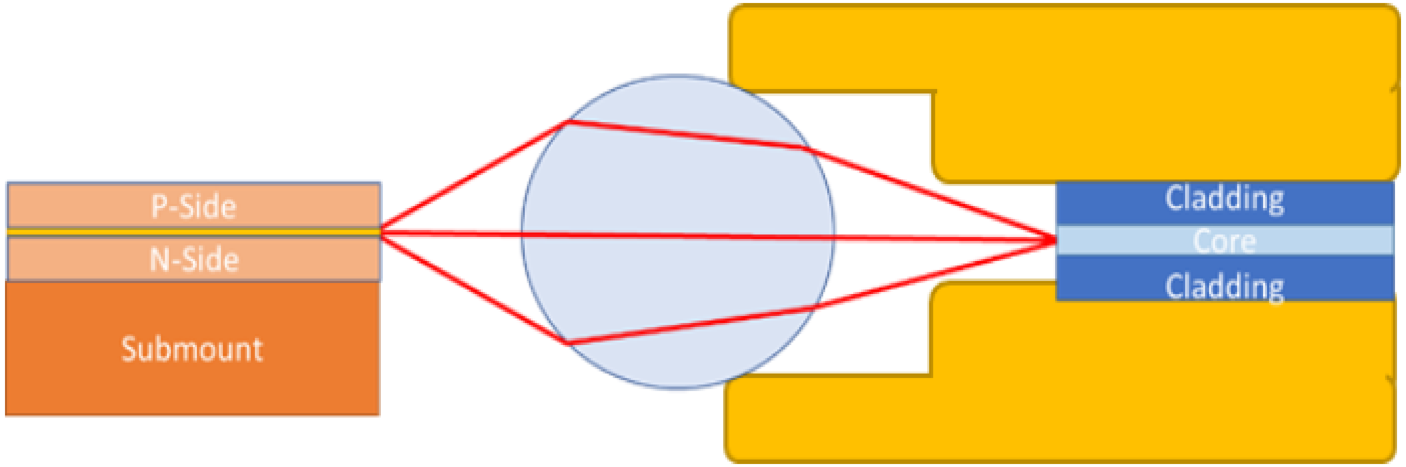


0.22 NA Silica Core, Glass Clad Multimode Optical Fiber, Step Index, fiber cables:
https://www.thorlabs.com/newgrouppage9.cfm?objectgroup_id=6838

Fiber Coupling

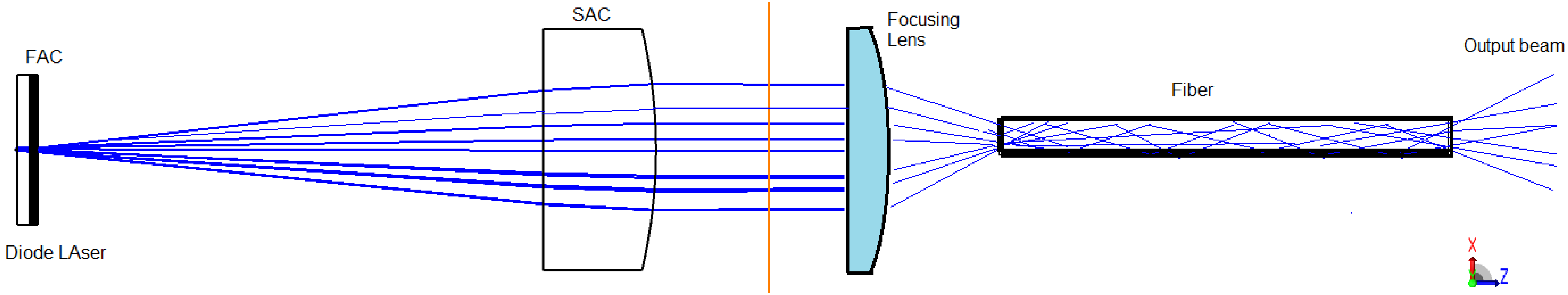
Fiber-coupled diode lasers have become commonplace since the telecom boom of the 1990s. Fiber optics are widely used in laser technology because of their ability to trap light and guide it from one location to another without experiencing significant loses.

The most straightforward approach is to utilize two ball lenses, one to collimate the laser diode and then one to refocus it into the fiber.



Diode Laser & Fiber Coupling

If we introduce both FAC and SAC, a converging lens (or lens group) is required to focus laser beam into the fiber core.



30W 915 nm Uncooled Multimode Laser Diode Module

Some Key Points for Diode Laser and Fiber Coupling

Definitions & Equations:

$$BPP = w_0\theta = M^2\frac{\lambda}{\pi}$$

$$BPP_f = w_{0f}\theta_f$$

$$BPP_s = w_{0s}\theta_s$$

$$BPP_{tot}^2 = BPP_f^2 + BPP_s^2$$

$$M^2 = \frac{\pi w_0\theta}{\lambda}$$

$$B = \frac{P}{\pi^2 Q^2} = \frac{P}{\pi^2 \times BPP_{tot}^2}$$

$$Q = \frac{w_0}{2\theta}$$

BPP = Beam Parameter Product

P = Optical power of the beam

For effective coupling:

$$BPP_{tot} < \left(\frac{D_{fiber}}{2} \times NA_{fiber}\right)$$

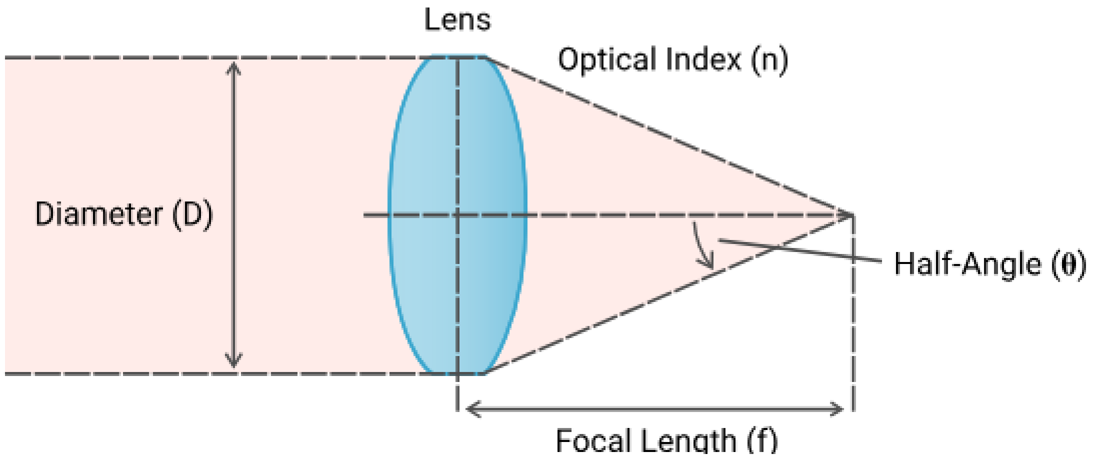
Image space NA of the focusing lens:

$$NA_{lens} = n_0 \sin(\theta)$$

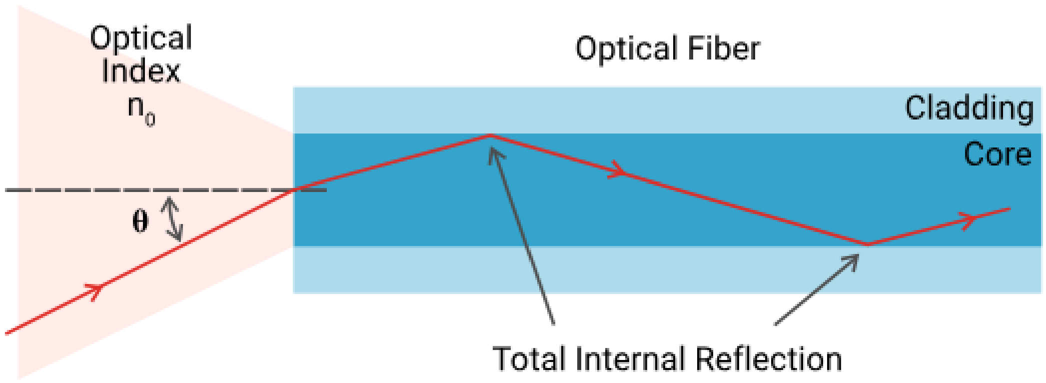
D_{fiber} = Diameter of the fiber core

n_0 = Refractive index of the medium surrounding the optical system

BPP quantifies the quality of a laser beam, and how well it can be focused to a small spot.
A Gaussian beam has the lowest possible BPP = λ / π



$$NA_{lens} = n_0 \sin(\theta)$$



$$NA_{fiber} = n_0 \sin(\theta_{\max})$$

$\theta_{\max}$ is the half-angle of the cone of acceptance

Example 5

Consider a diode laser and fiber core data are given as follows:

$$\theta_{\perp} = \theta_f = 29^{\circ} = 0.5061 \text{ mrad}$$
$$\theta_{\parallel} = \theta_s = 9^{\circ} = 0.1571 \text{ mrad}$$
$$w_{of} = 0.5\ \mu m = 0.0005 \text{ mm}$$
$$w_{os} = 95\ \mu m = 0.0950 \text{ mm}$$
$$\lambda = 980 \text{ nm}$$

$$D_{fiber} = 500\ \mu m = 0.5 \text{ mm}$$
$$NA_{fiber} = 0.1 \text{ rad} = 100 \text{ mrad}$$

Then,

$$BPP_f = 0.253 \text{ mm. mrad}$$
$$BPP_s = 14.92 \text{ mm. mrad}$$
$$BPP_{tot} \approx 13 \text{ mm. mrad}$$

$$\frac{D_{fiber}}{2} \times NA_{fiber} = 25 \text{ mm. mrad}$$

Diffraction limited BBP:

$$BPP = \frac{\lambda}{\pi} = 0.3119 \text{ mm. mrad}$$

Therefore, an effective fiber coupling can be achieved since $BPP_{tot} < 25\ 25 \text{ mm. mrad}$

Example 6: Diode Laser/FAC/SAC/Fiber Coupling

- **Soruce:** Single emitter provided by Ermaksan Company (see course page)
- **Collimators:** We'll design FAC/SAC lenses. Material: SILICA, S-TIH53, S-NPH3, N-BK7, H-K9L, D-PK3, D-K59
- **Focusing Lens(es):** Can be aspheric.
- **Fiber:** Core diameter = 300 μm and NA = 0.22. Material: core = SILICA, cladding = F_SILICA

In the design procedure, We use both Sequentail mode and Nonsequential mode.
Details are going to be given during the lesson.