



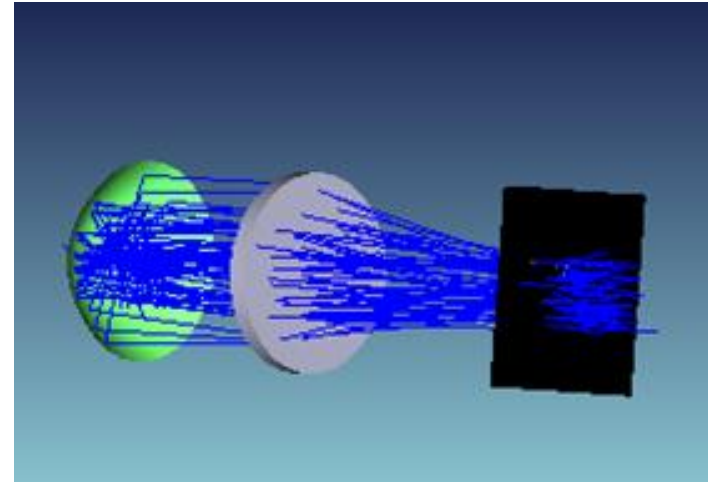
Lectures Notes on Optical Design using Zemax OpticStudio

Lecture 17

Non-Sequential Mode in Zemax

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Content

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Sequential vs Non-Sequential Modes**
- 3. Some NSC Applications**

Introduction

There are 2 distinct ray-tracing modes in Zemax (OpticStudio)

- Sequential
- Non-sequential

In addition, a **hybrid mode** exists in which sequential and non-sequential ray-trace are used in the same system.

In this lecture, we will see some basic applications of Non-sequential ray tracing in Zemax.

Sequential Mode

- It is mainly used for designing imaging and afocal systems.
- Surfaces are defined in the Lens Data Editor.
- Ray can only intersect each surface once and has to do it in a specified -sequential- order (i.e. surface #0 then #1 ,#2 ...) and hence the name sequential ray tracing.
- Ray can only reflect if the surface material type is MIRROR. *Partial reflections from refractive surfaces (Fresnel reflections) are accounted for to the extent of calculating the correct refracted energy, including the effects on dielectric or metallic mirrors.*
- Each surface has its own local coordinate system. The position of each surface along the optical axis is referenced to the previous surface. In other words, the “Thickness” column in the Lens Data Editor refers to the distance from current surface and not from a global reference point.

Non-sequential Mode

- It is primarily used for non-imaging applications such as illumination systems and/or stray-light analysis.
- Surfaces or volume objects are defined in the Non-Sequential Component Editor
- Mechanical components may be easily imported from CAD programs, so that full Opto-Mechanical analysis may be undertaken.
- A ray can intersect the same object more than once and can intersect multiple objects in any order; hence the name non-sequential.
- Each object is referenced to a global coordinate, unless specified otherwise.
- Imaging-system properties such as stop location, entrance and exit pupil, field, system aperture etc. that exist in sequential systems may not be meaningful in non-sequential systems.
- The main analysis feature in non-sequential mode is the detector ray-trace, which gives spatial and angular data on incoherent or coherent rays.

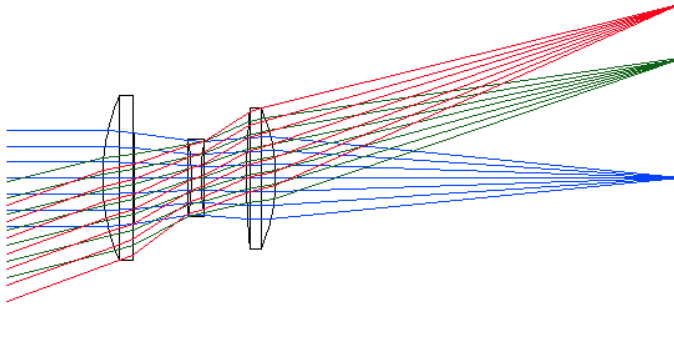


Stray ray example

Comparison / Application

Sequential Mode

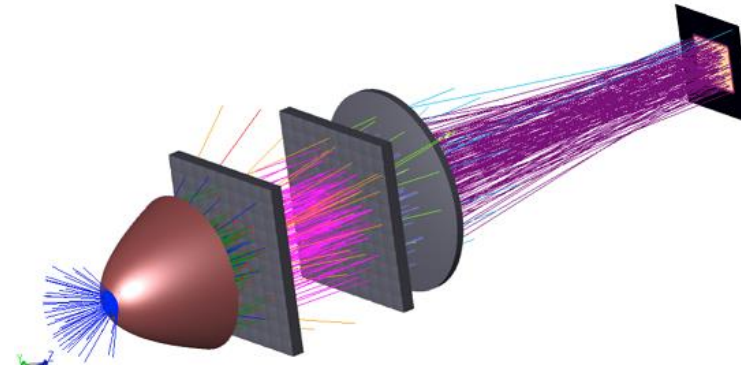
- + Rays must hit
- every surface
- one time
- in the same order



- + Imaging optics
- + Afocal systems

Non-Sequential Mode

- + Rays can hit
- any object
- an number of times ($n \geq 0$)
- in any order



- + Solar Cells
- + Car lamps
- + Monochromator / Spectrometer
- + Illumination Systems

Ray Tracing in Non-Squential Mode

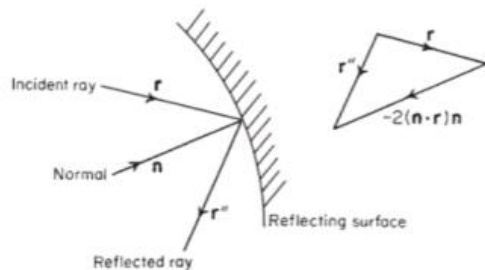
In Non-squential mode Zemax uses **Monte Carlo Ray Tracing**.

MC Method

select random rays from any source in the simulation. Error $\propto \frac{1}{\sqrt{\text{number of rays}}}$

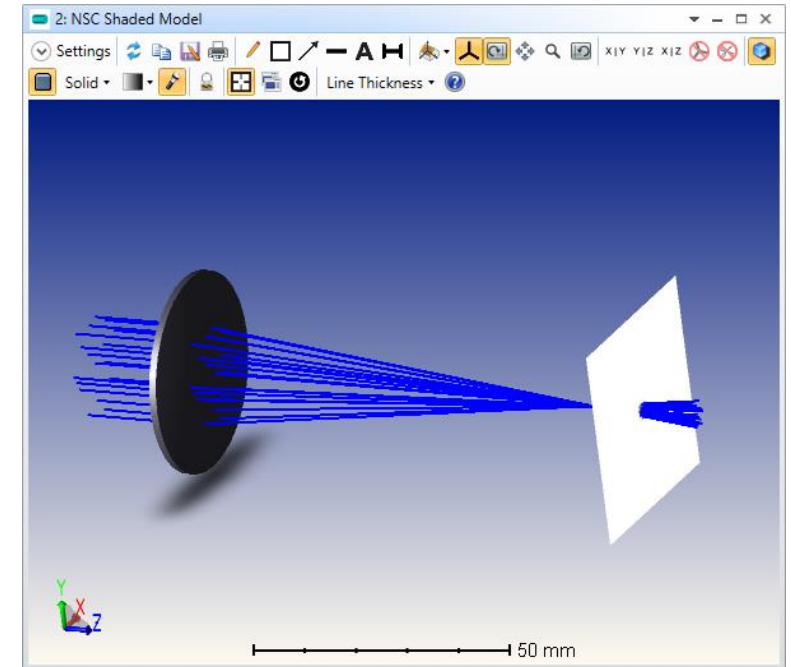
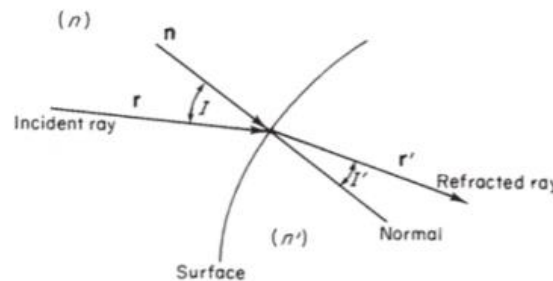
use geometrical optics (vector based calculations for reflection, refraction, polarization)

$$\mathbf{r}'' = \mathbf{r} - 2(\mathbf{n} \cdot \mathbf{r})\mathbf{n}$$



$$n' \sin I' = n \sin I$$
$$n' \mathbf{r}' \times \mathbf{n} = n \mathbf{r} \times \mathbf{n}$$

$$n' \mathbf{r}' = n \mathbf{r} + \underbrace{(n' \cos I' - n \cos I)}_{n' \mathbf{r}' \cdot \mathbf{n} - n \mathbf{r} \cdot \mathbf{n}} \mathbf{n}$$



Example 1: How to add standart lens

	Object Type	Comment	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	Data Type	Color
1	Source Ellipse ▾		0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	-	20	1E+05	1.000	0	0	12.000
2	Standard Lens ▾		0	0	0.000	0.000	20.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	BK7	100.000	0.000	20.000	20.000	6.000	-80.000
3	Detector Rectangle ▾		0	0	0.000	0.000	120.000 V	0.000	0.000	0.000		20.000	20.000	100	100	0	3

*** Object1

Source Ellipse

of Layout Rays 20

of Analysis Rays 1e5

X Half Width 12

Y Half Width 12

*** Object2

Standart Lens

Z position 20

Material BK7

Radius1 100

Thickness 6

Clear1 = Edge1 20

Radius2 -80

Clear2 = Edge2 20

*** Object3

Detector

Z position 120

Material Blank (or can be ABSORB or MIRROR)

X Half Width 20

Y Half Width 20

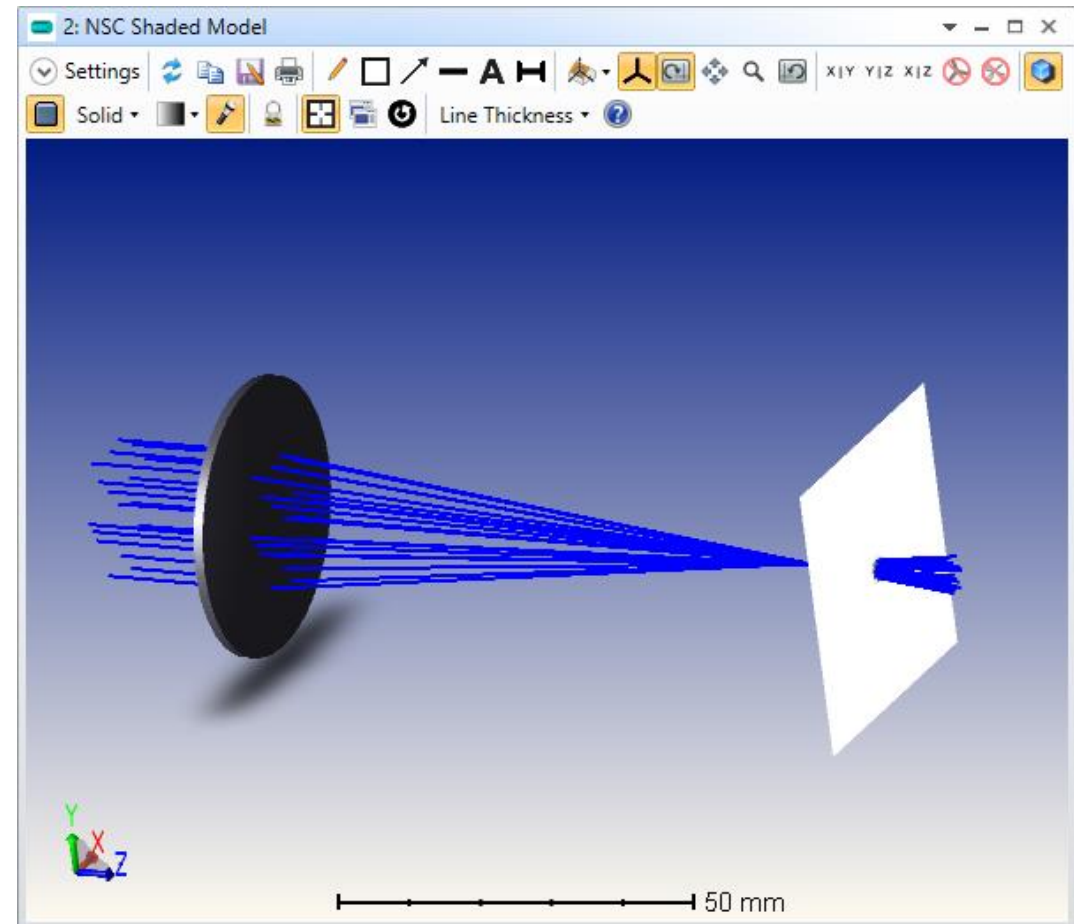
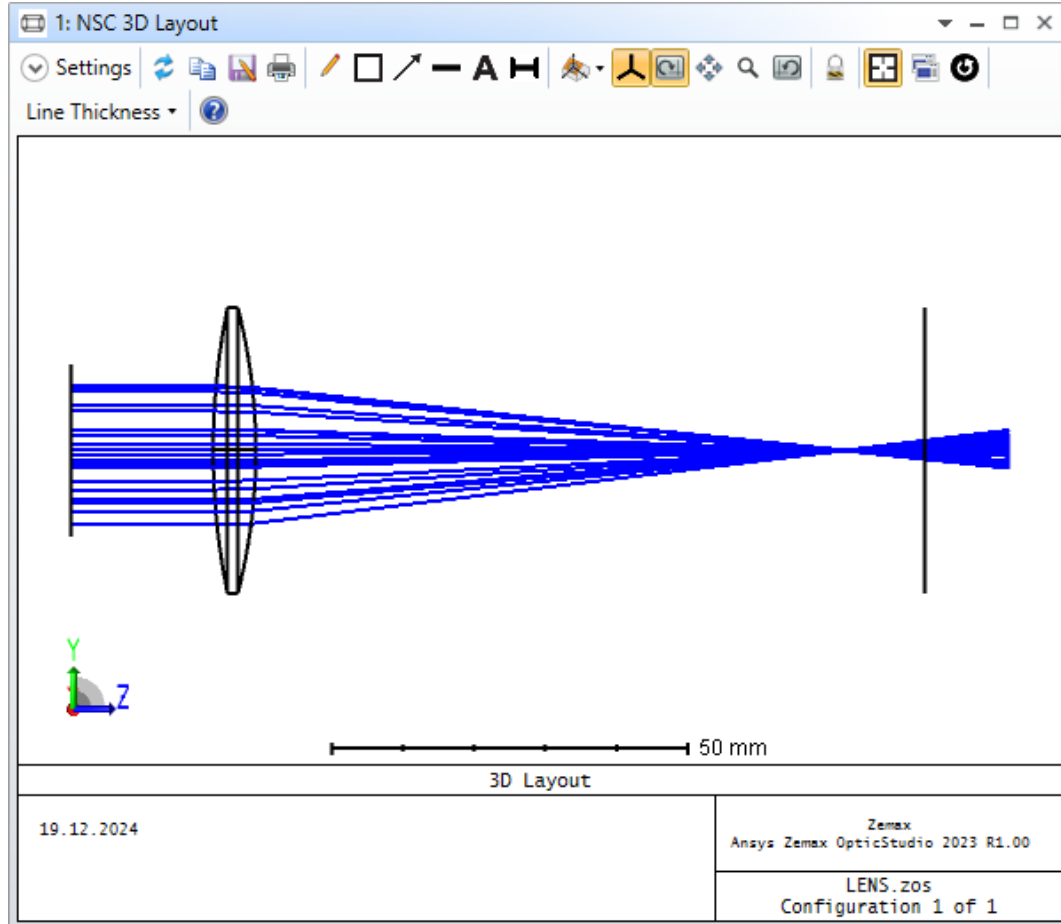
X Pixels 200

Y Pixels 200

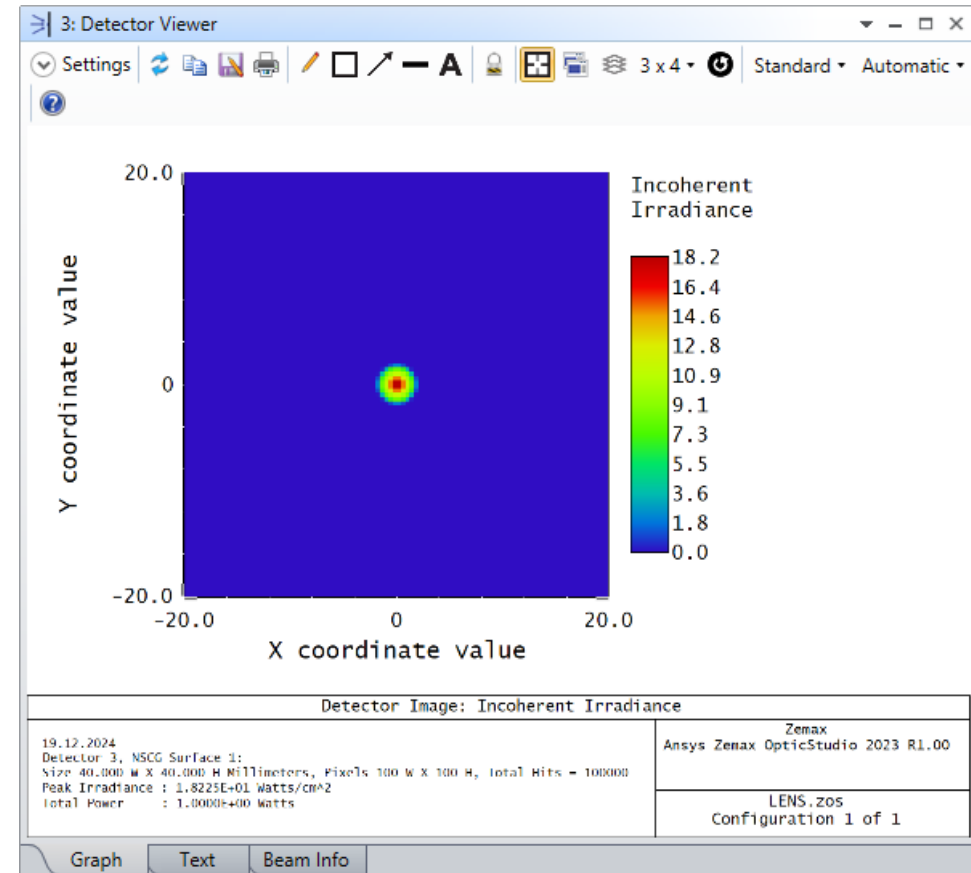
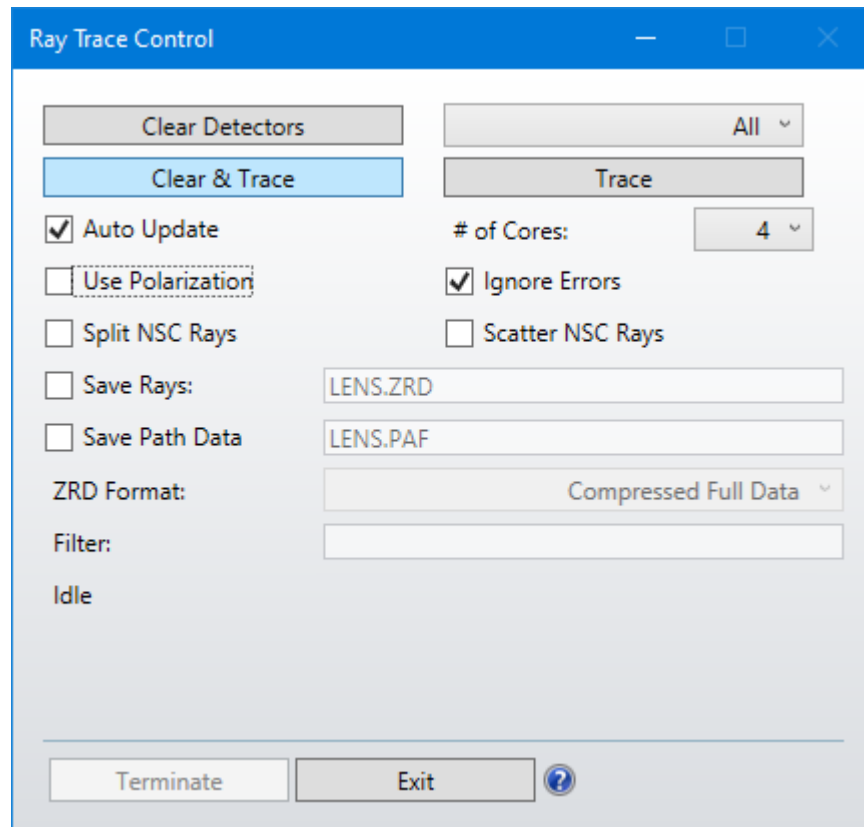
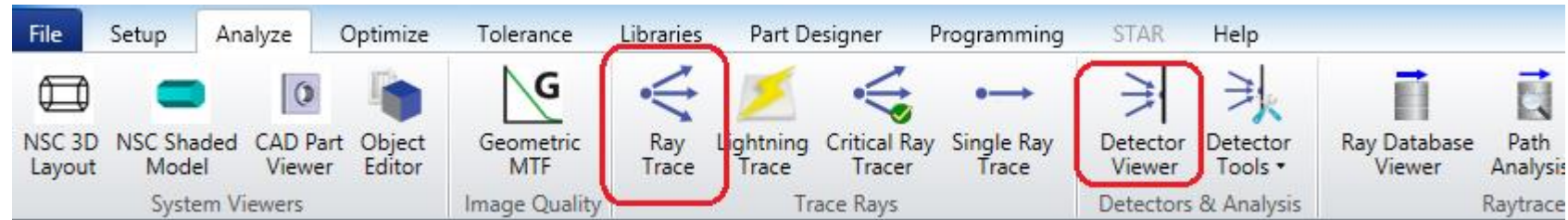
Color 3 (detector displays false color)

Example 1: Layout

	Object Type	Comment	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	Data Type	Color
1	Source Ellipse ▾		0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	-	20	1E+05	1.000	0	0	12.000
2	Standard Lens ▾		0	0	0.000	0.000	20.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	BK7	100.000	0.000	20.000	20.000	6.000	-80.000
3	Detector Rectangle ▾		0	0	0.000	0.000	120.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		20.000	20.000	100	100	0	3



Example 1: Ray Tracing



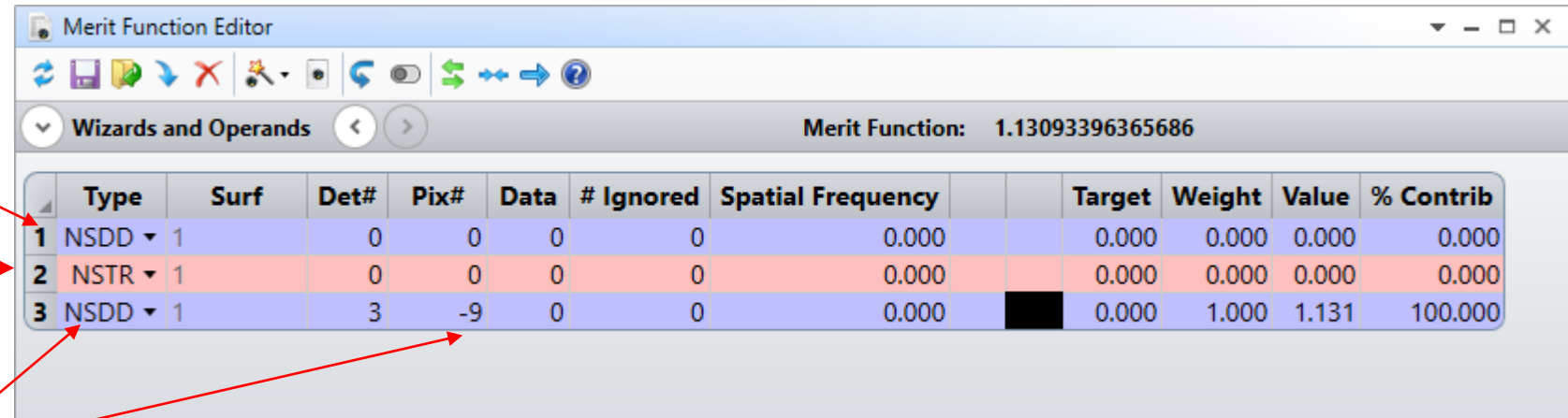
Example 1: Optimization

The aim is to put detector at a location where we have minimum rms spot size

Clear detector

Start ray tracing

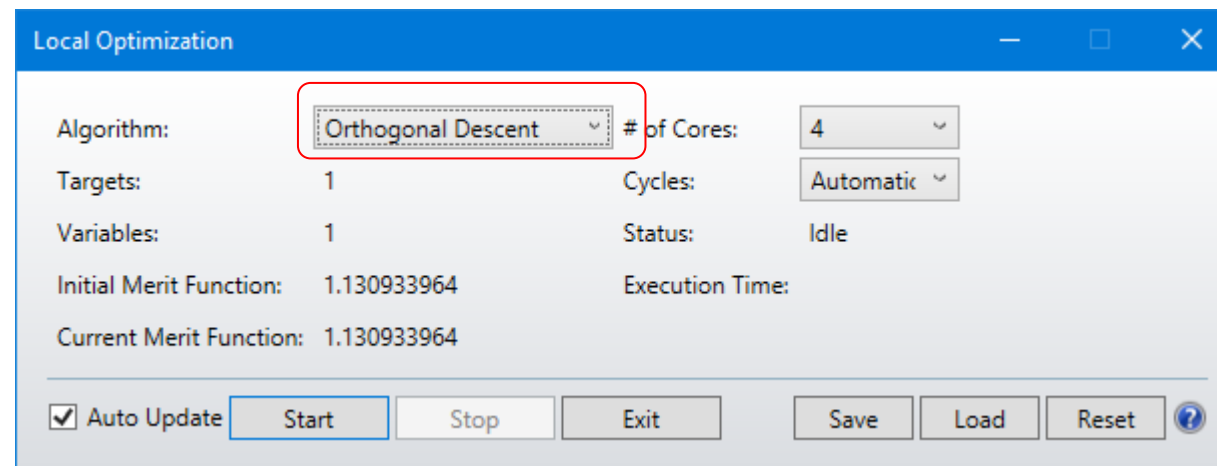
Obtain minimum spot size



Merit Function Editor

Wizards and Operands Merit Function: 1.13093396365686

	Type	Surf	Det#	Pix#	Data	# Ignored	Spatial Frequency		Target	Weight	Value	% Contrib
1	NSDD	1	0	0	0	0	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
2	NSTR	1	0	0	0	0	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
3	NSDD	1	3	-9	0	0	0.000		0.000	1.000	1.131	100.000



Local Optimization

Algorithm: Orthogonal Descent # of Cores: 4

Targets: 1 Cycles: Automatic

Variables: 1 Status: Idle

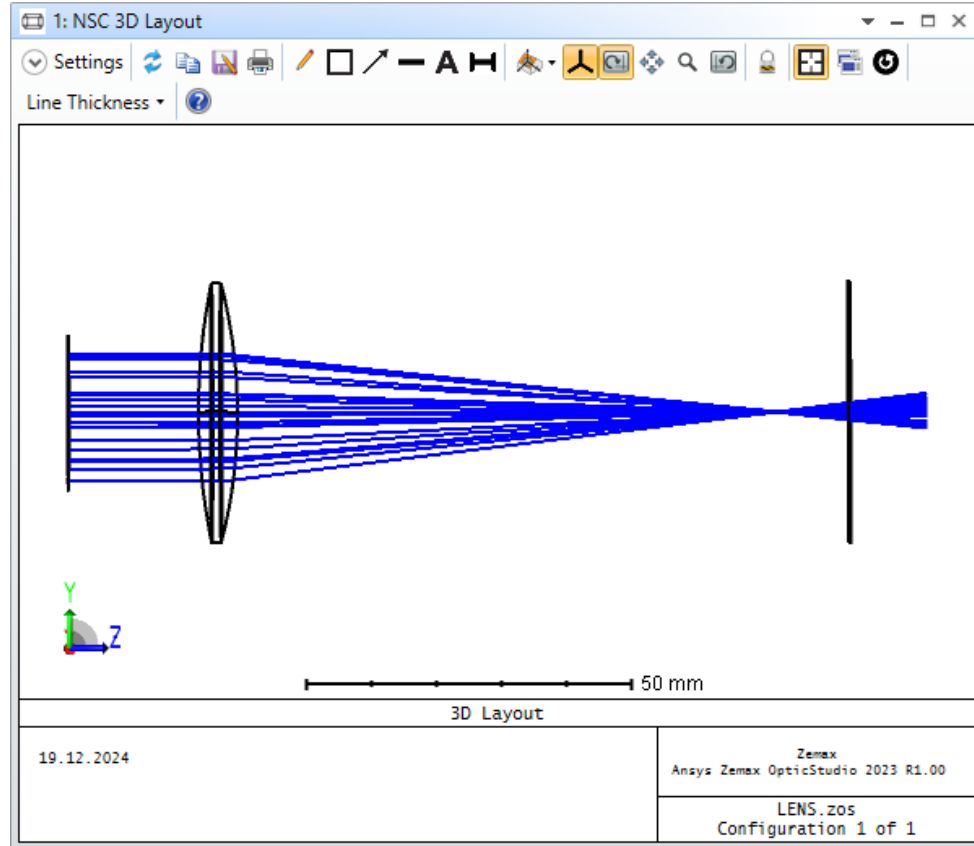
Initial Merit Function: 1.130933964 Execution Time:

Current Merit Function: 1.130933964

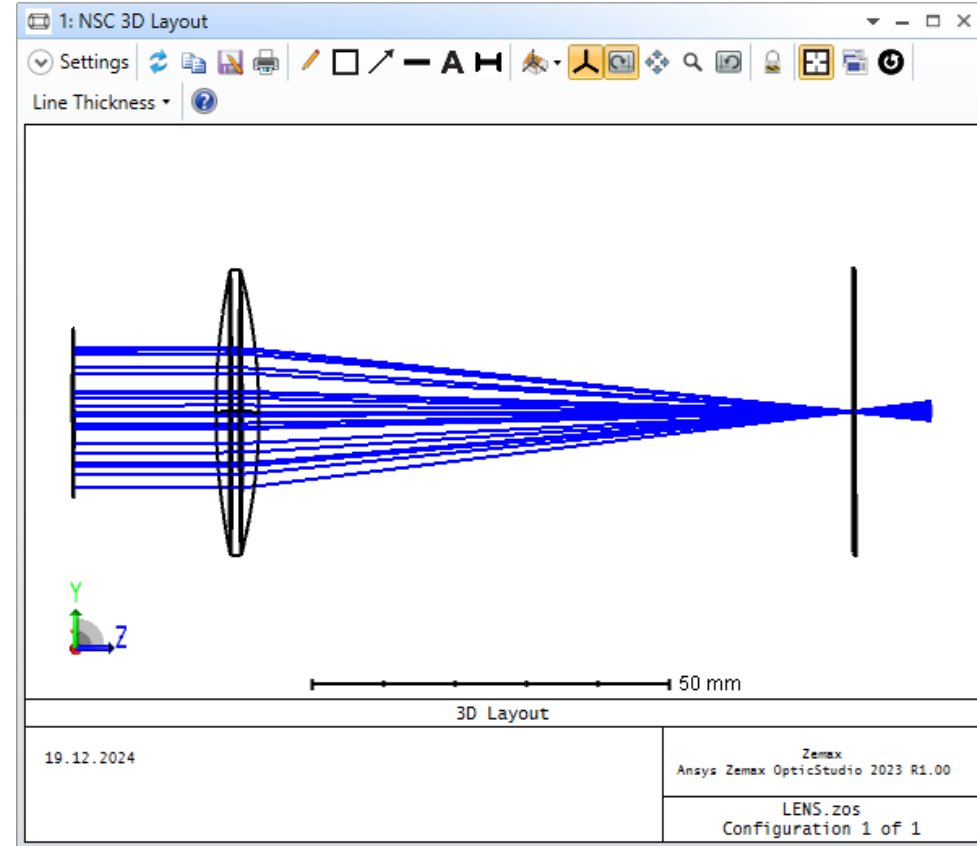
☒ Auto Update Start Stop Exit Save Load Reset

Example 1: Results

Z Position of detector = 120 mm
Before optimization



Z Position of detector = 108.7 mm
After optimization

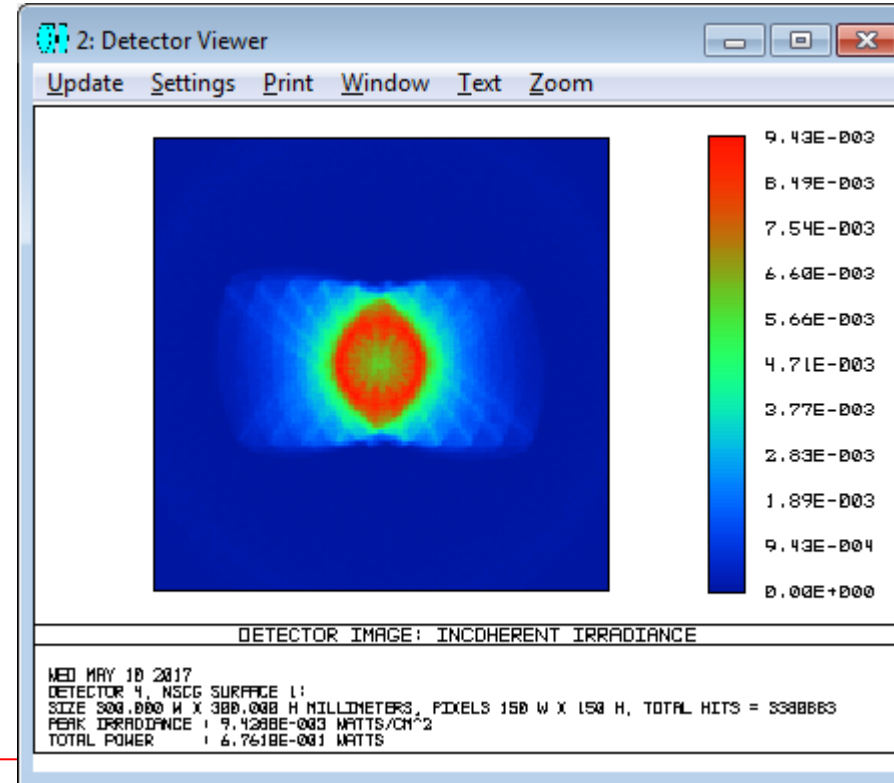
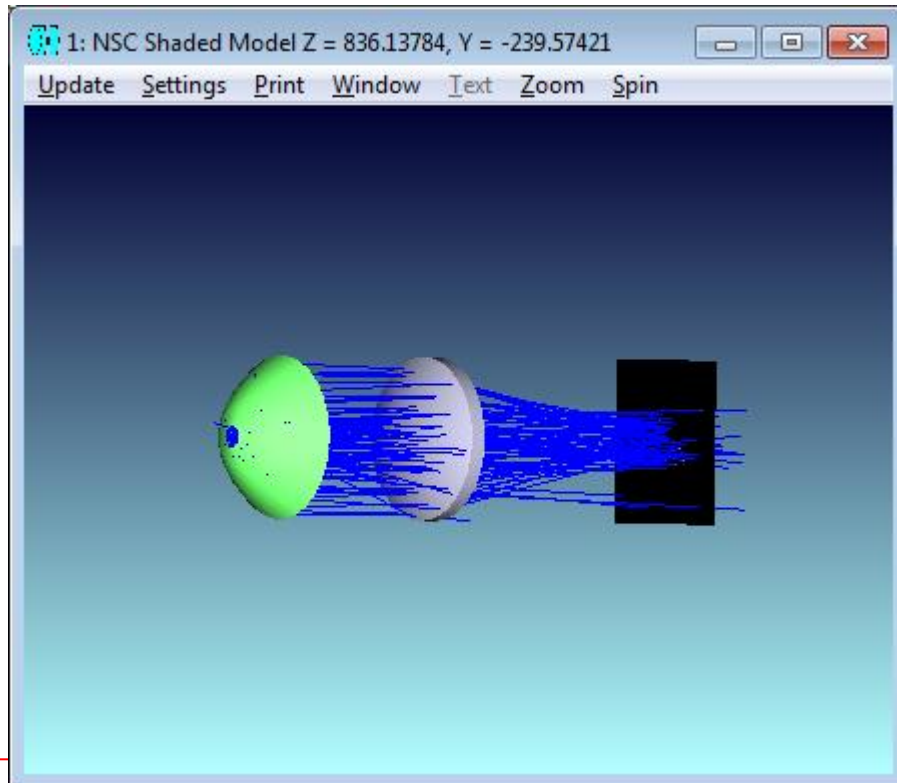


Example 2: Mirror-Lens-Detector

We will make a non-sequential system with

- a filament source
- a parabolic reflector
- a plano-convex lens
- a rectangular detector

as shown in the layout below:



*** Object1

Standart Surface

Material	Mirror
Radius	100
Conic	-1 (parabola)
Max Aper	150
Min Aper	20 (center hole in the reflector)

*** Object2

Source Filament

Z position	50 (focus of the parabolic reflector)
# Layout Rays	20
# Analysis Rays	5e6
Length	20
Radius	5
Turns	10
Tilt about Y	90 (deg)
X position	-10 (mm)

*** Object4

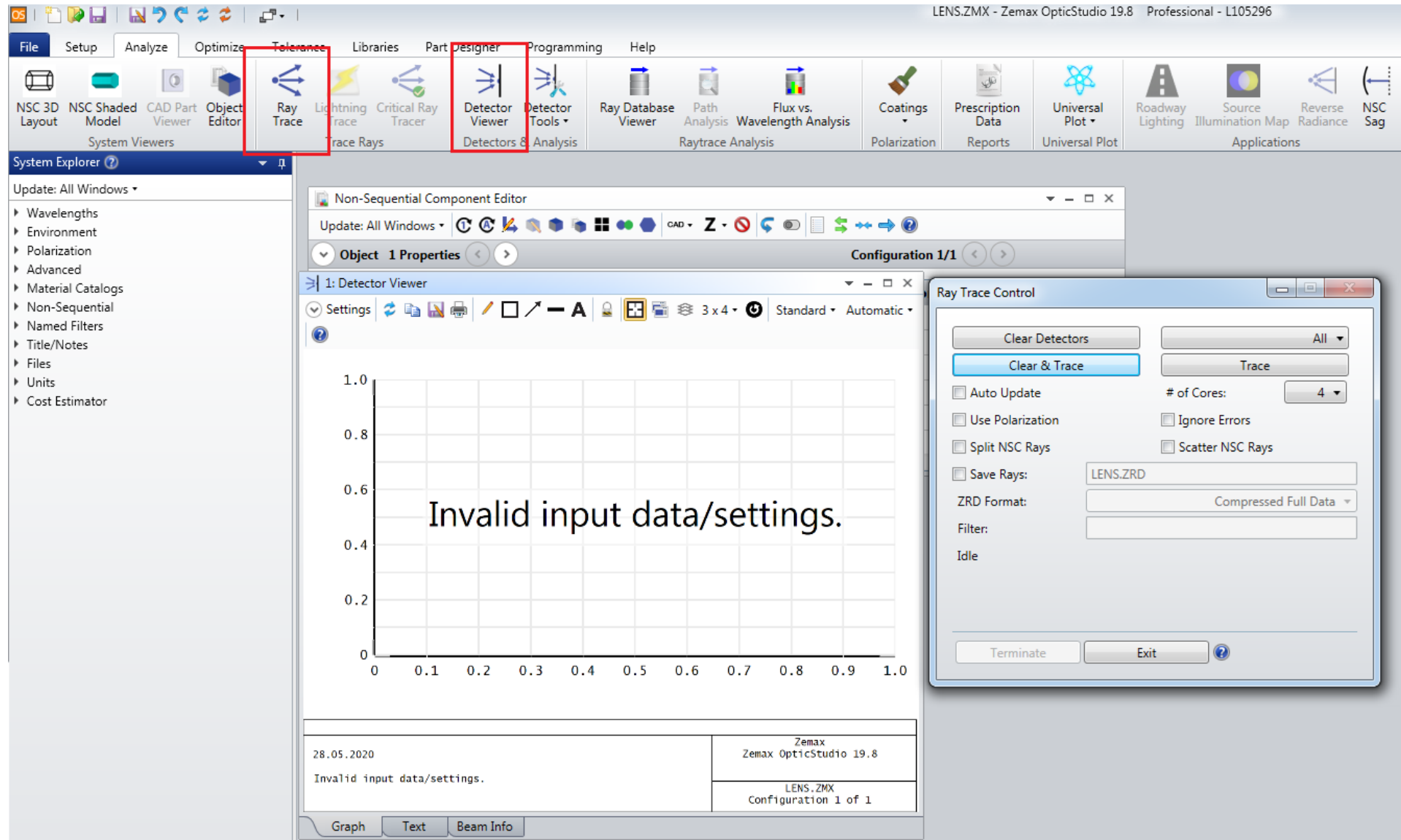
Standard Lens

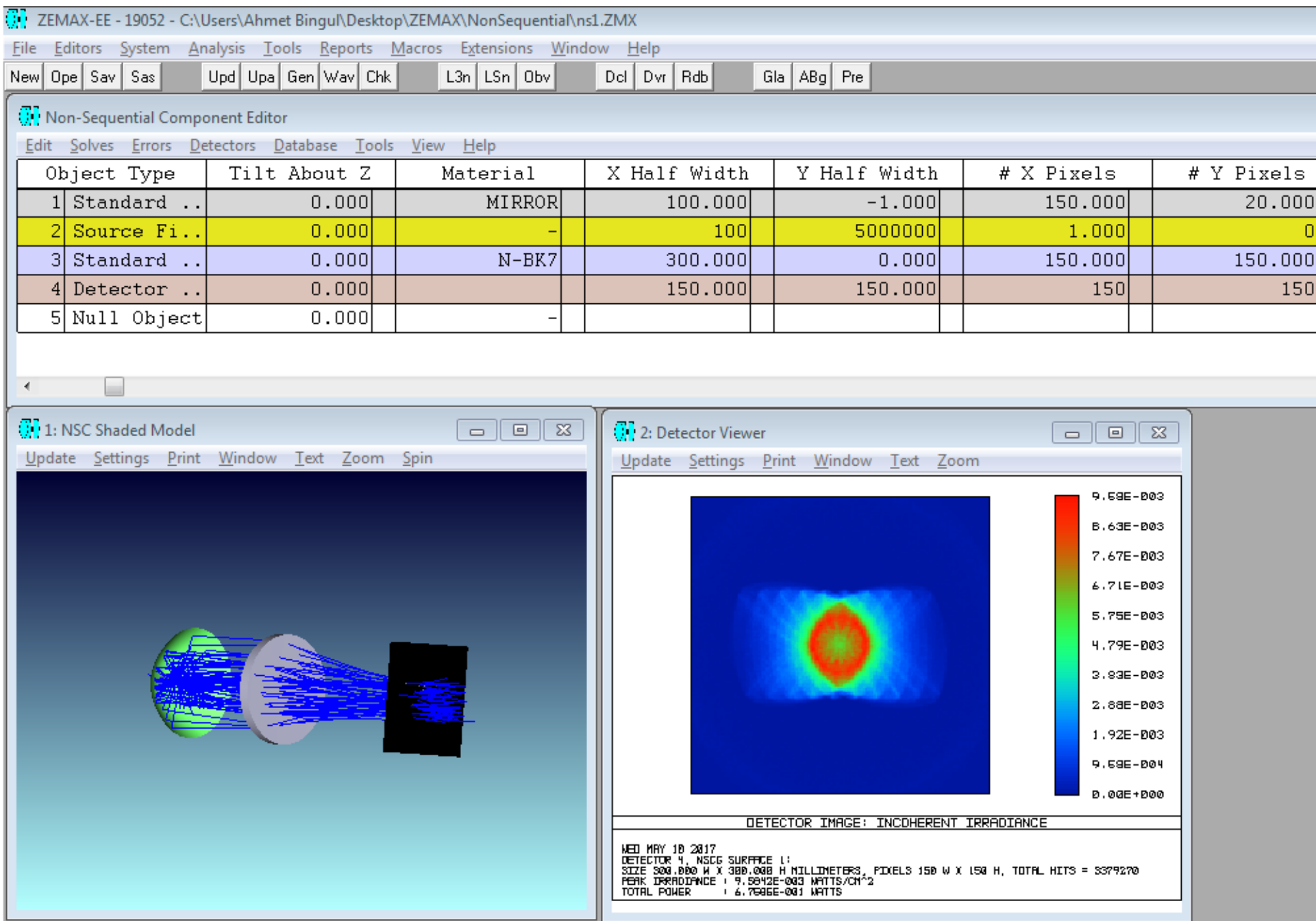
Ref Object	3 (before detector)
Z Position	200
Material	N-BK7
Radius 1	300
Clear 1	150
Edge 1	150
Thickness	70
Clear 2	150
Edge 2	150

*** Object5

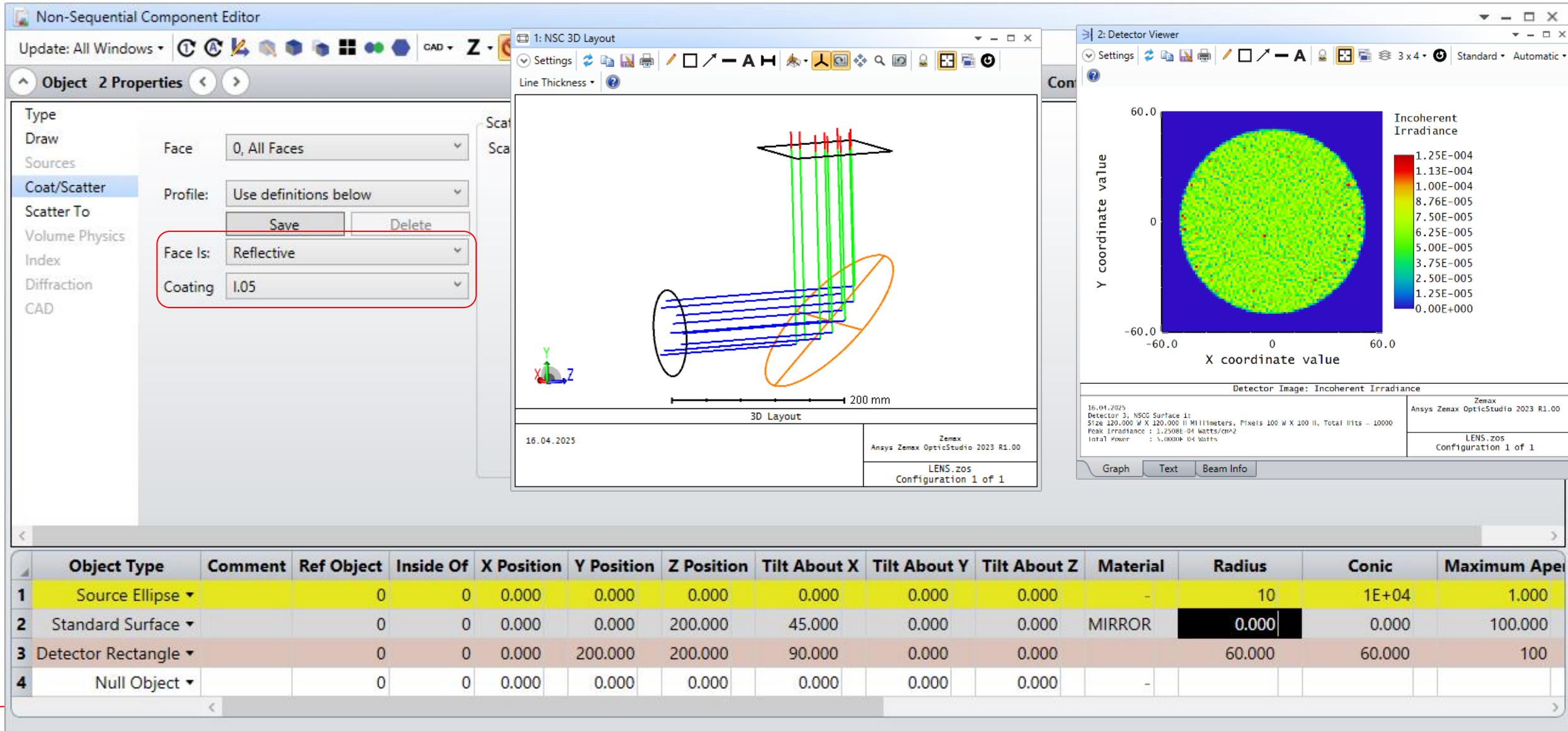
Detector	Rect
Z position	1000
Material	Blank (or can be ABSORB or MIRROR)
X Half Width	150
Y Half Width	150
# X Pixels	150
# Y Pixels	150
Color	1 (detector displays inverse greyscale)

In the analysis you should use **Detector Viewer** and **Ray Trace** buttons.





Example 3: Effect of Coating/Scattering on Mirror Surface



Type

Draw

Sources

Coat/Scatter

Scatter To

Volume Physics

Index

Diffraction

CAD

Face 0, All Faces

Profile: Use definitions below

Save

Delete

Face Is: Reflective

Coating I.50

Scatter

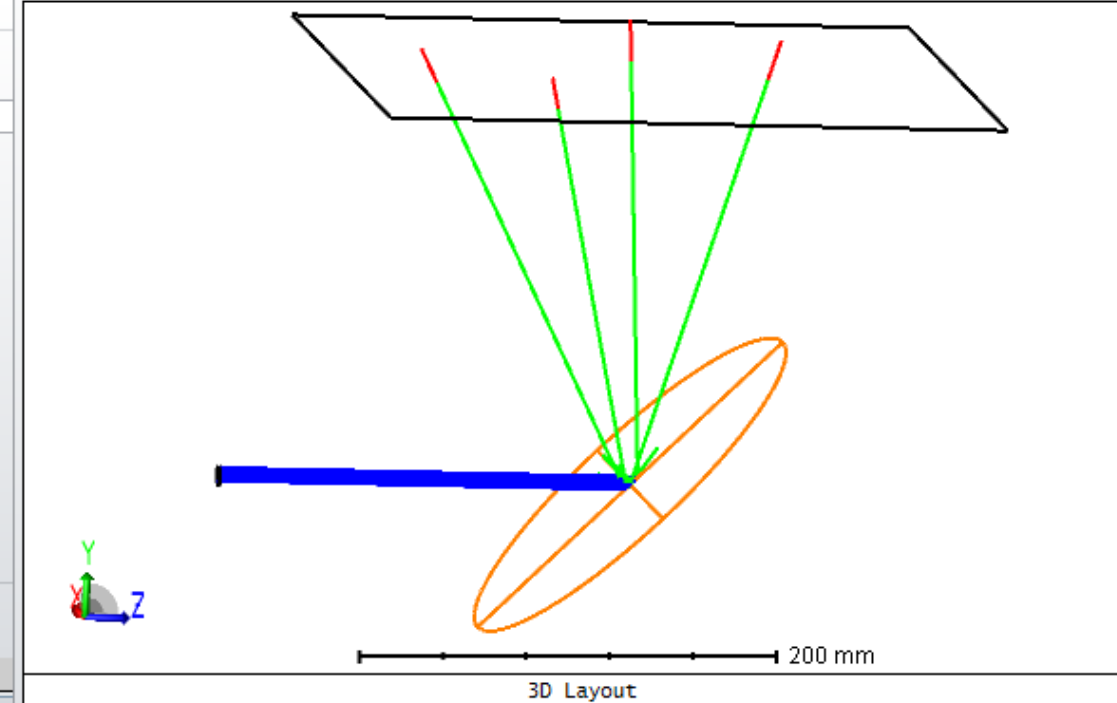
Scatter Model: Lambertian

Number Of Rays: 1

Scatter Fraction 1

☐ Thin Window Scattering

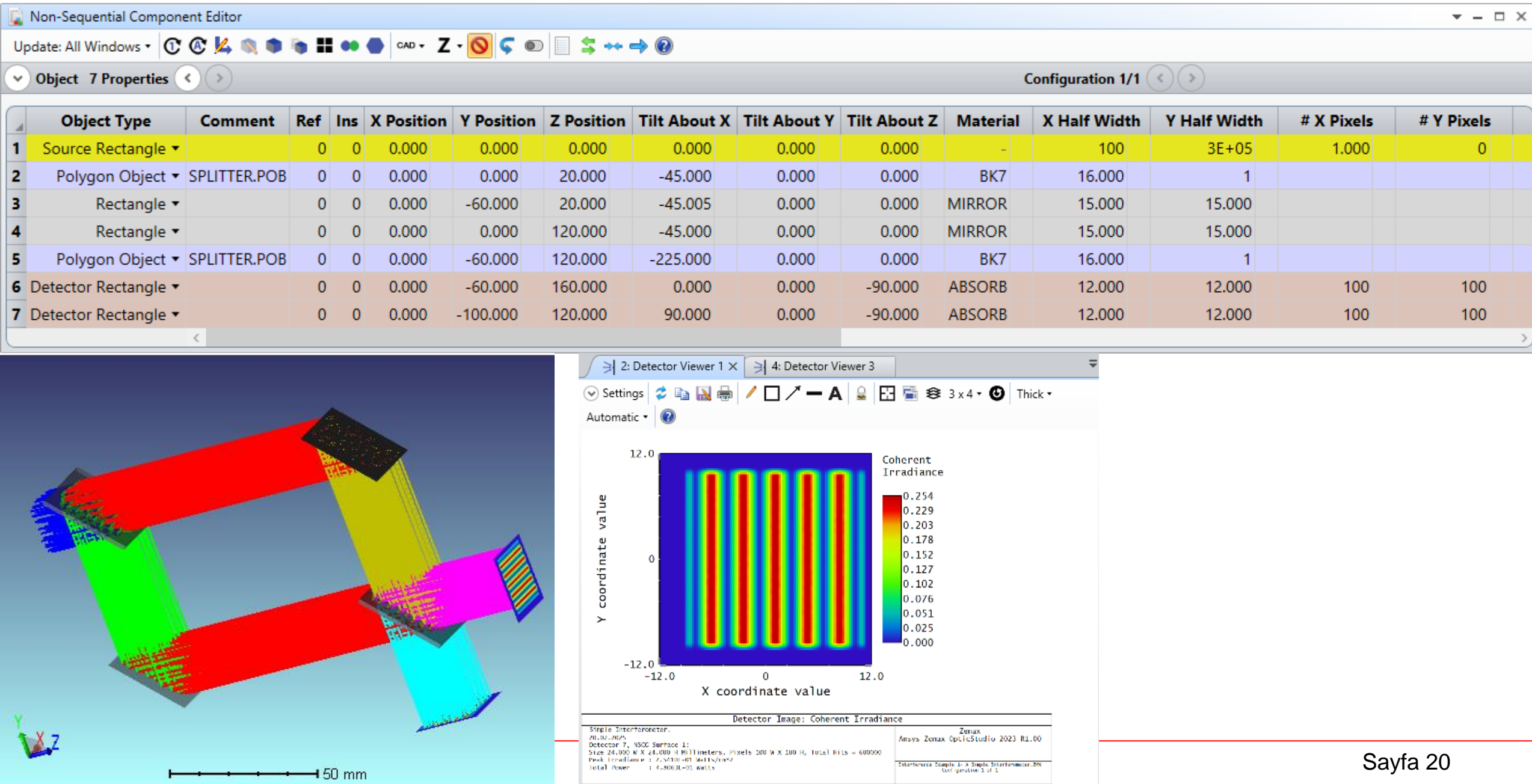
	Object Type	X	Tilt About Y	Tilt About Z	Material	Radius	Conic	Maximum Ape
1	Source Ellipse		0.000	0.000	-	10	1E+06	1.000
2	Standard Surface		0.000	0.000	MIRROR	0.000	0.000	100.000



16.04.2025

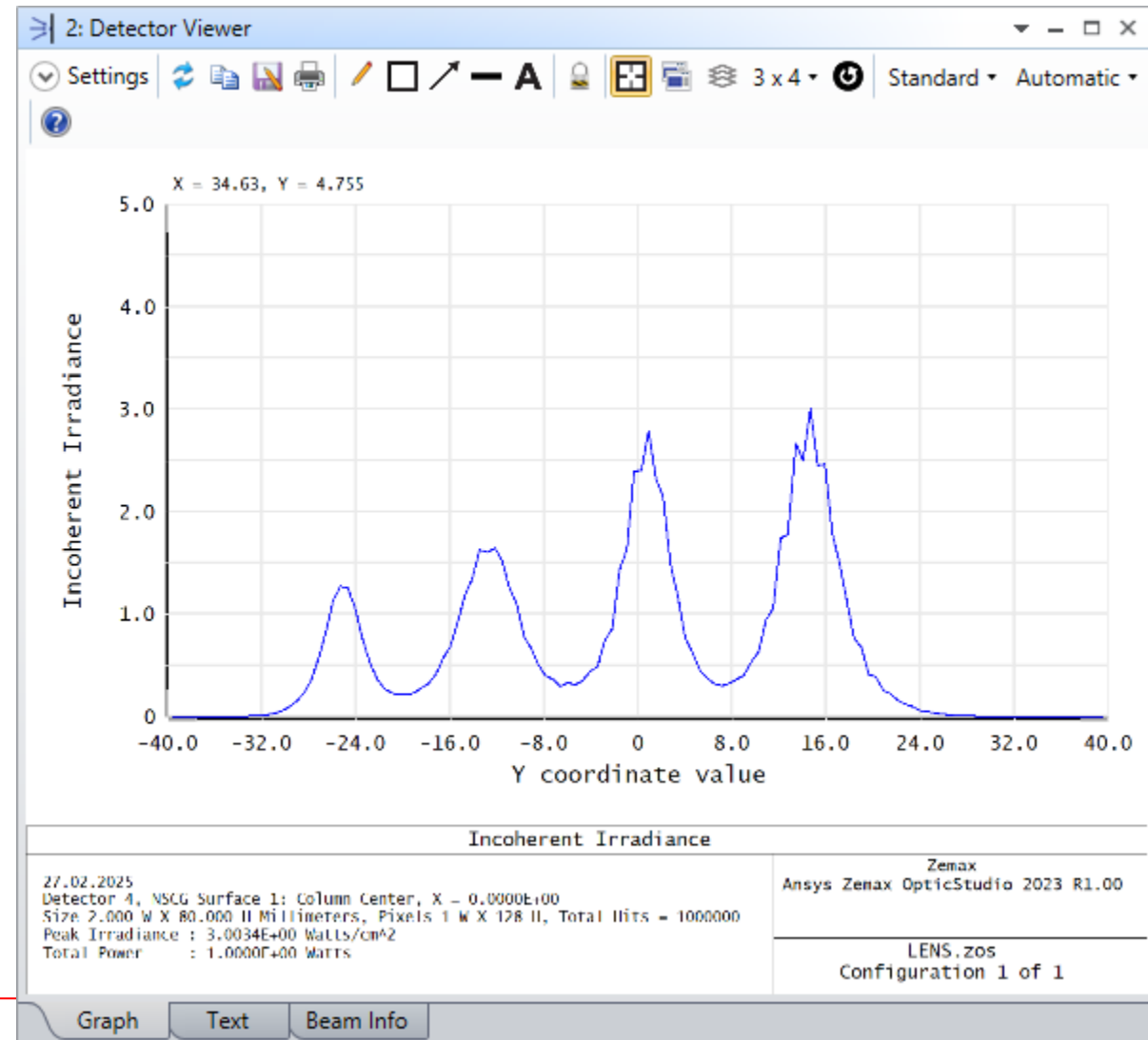
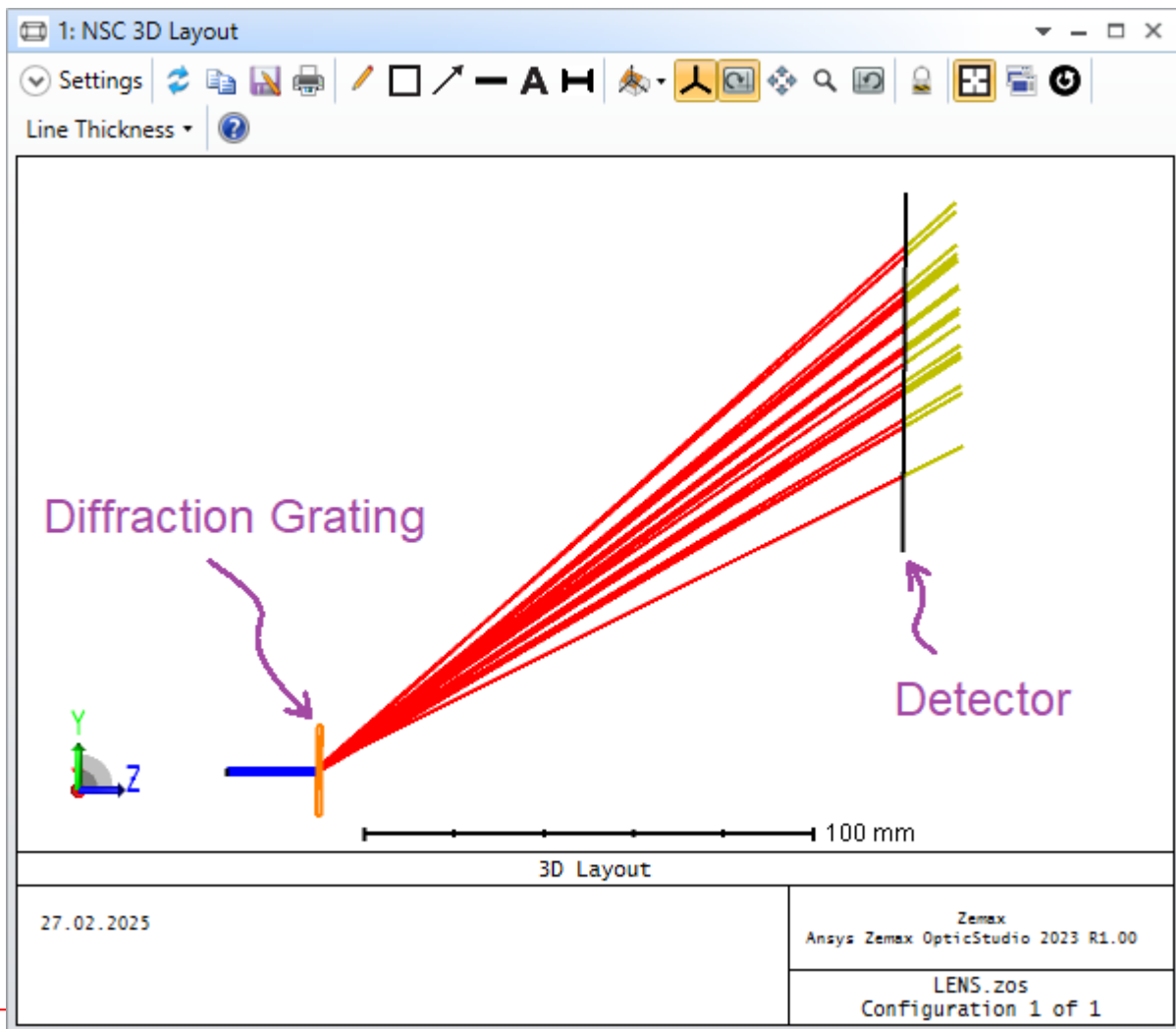
Zemax
Ansys Zemax OpticStudio 2023 R1.00LENS.zos
Configuration 1 of 1

Example 4: Interferometer (See Zemax Sample Folder)



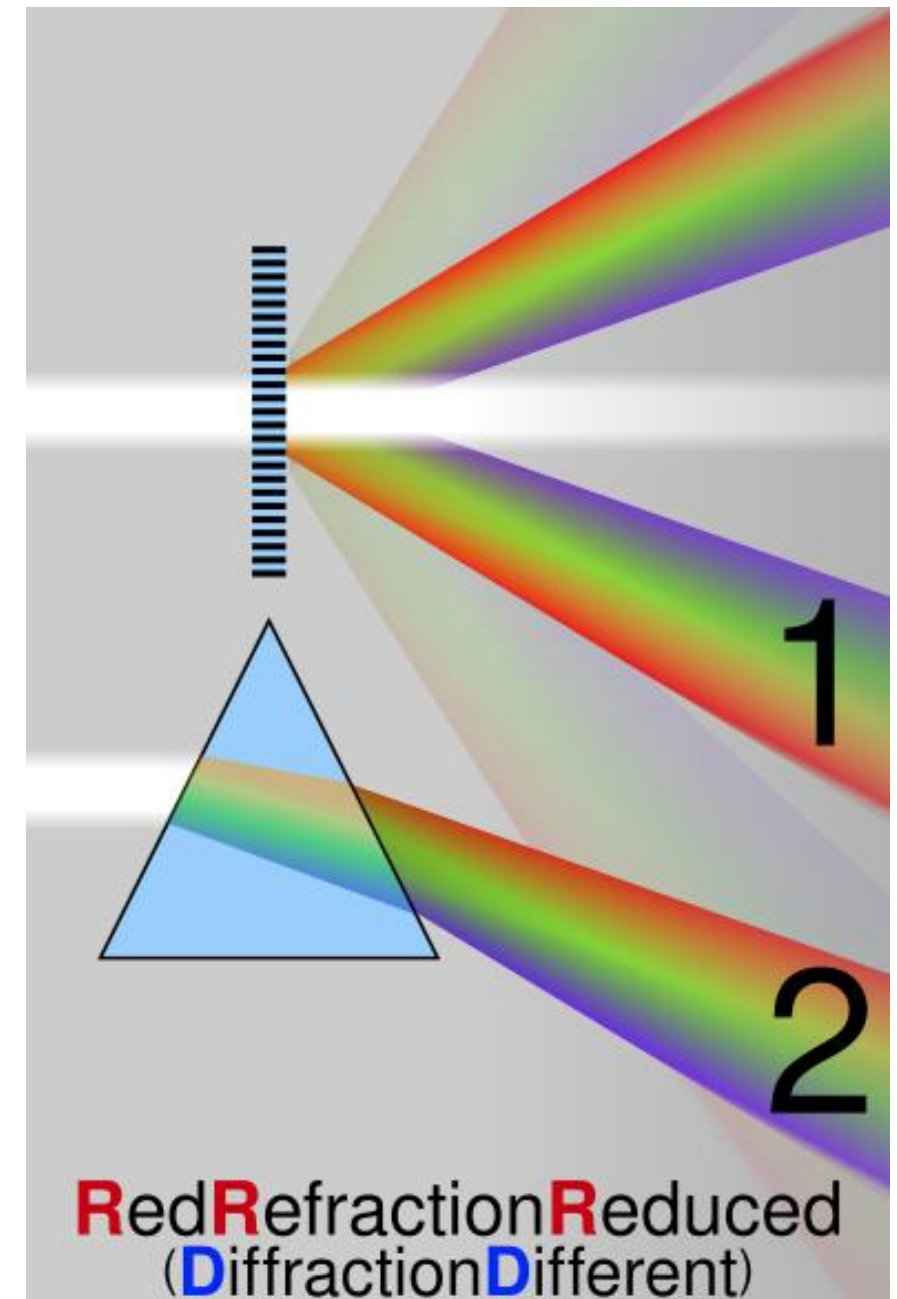
Example 5: Simple Spectrometer

	Object Type	Comment	Ref Object	Inside Of	X Position	Y Position	Z Position	Tilt About X	Tilt About Y	Tilt About Z	Material	Radius 1	Conic 1	Clear 1	Edge 1	Thickness	Radius 2	Conic 2	Clear 2
1	Source Ellipse ▾		0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	-	10	0	1.000	0	0	1.000	1.000	0.000
2	Source Ellipse ▾		0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	-	10	1E+06	1.000	0	0	1.000	1.000	0.000
3	Diffraction Grating ▾		0	0	0.000	0.000	20.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	10.000	10.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	10.000
4	Detector Rectangle ▾		0	0	0.000	90.000	150.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		1.000	40.000	1	128	0	0	0	0



Comparison of the spectra obtained from a diffraction grating by diffraction (1), and a prism by refraction (2). Longer wavelengths (red) are diffracted more, but refracted less than shorter wavelengths (violet).

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diffraction_grating

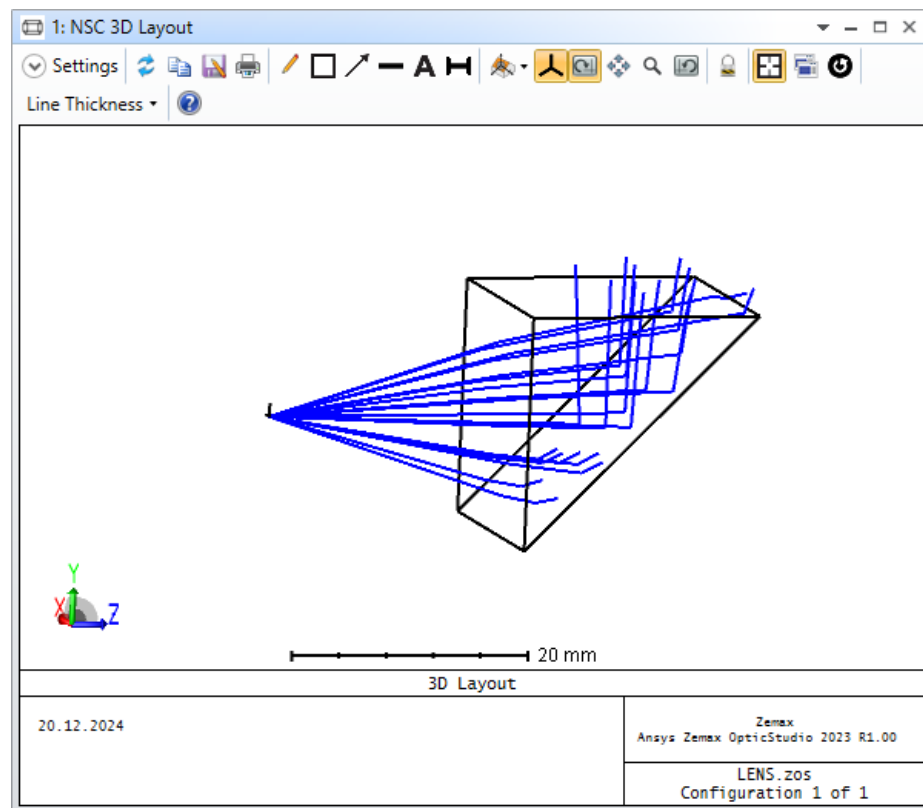


Example 6: Source Point

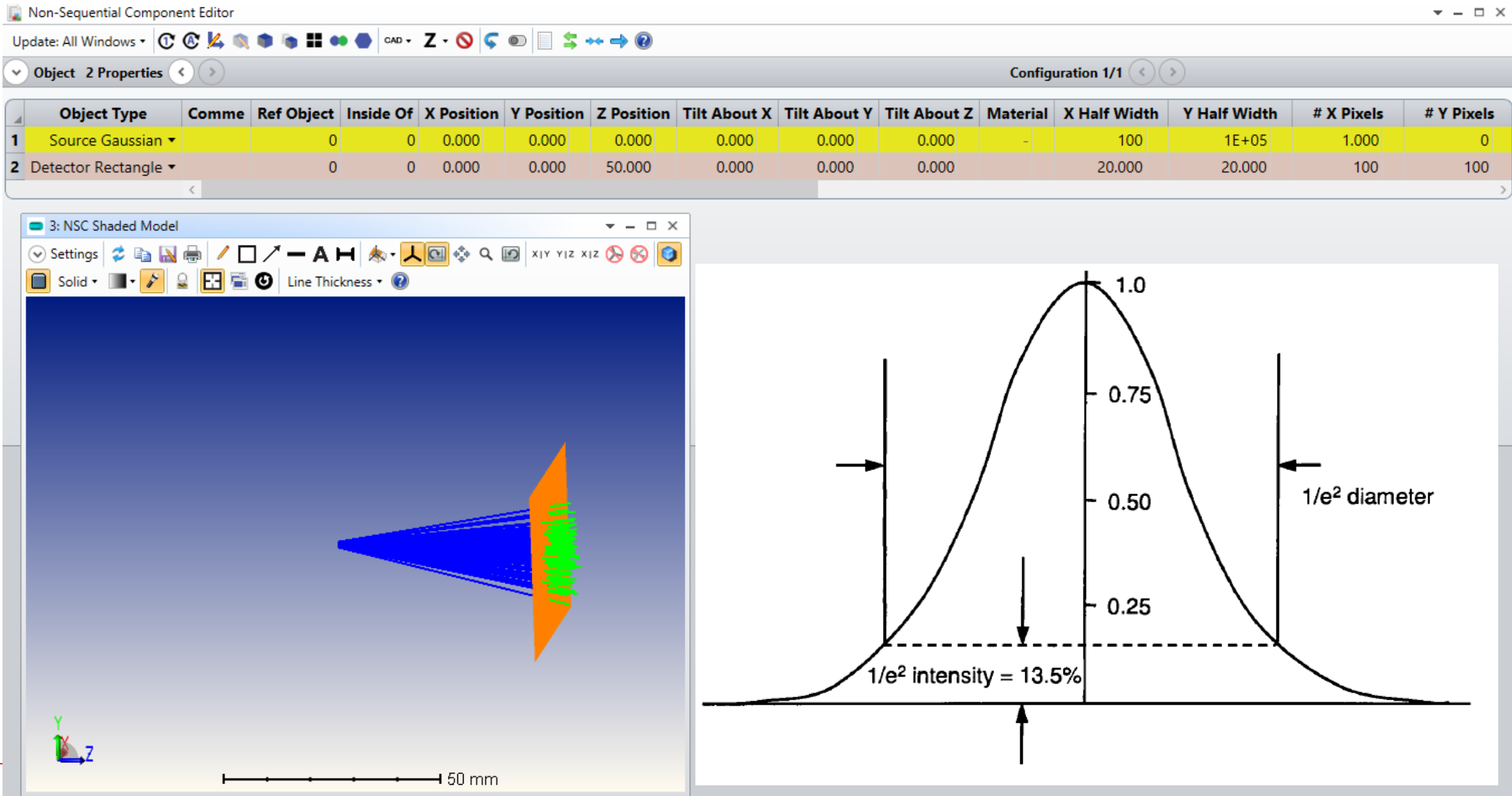
Non-Sequential Component Editor

Update: All Windows

<



Example 7: Source Gaussian



Source File

- The Source File is a source whose **ray coordinates**, **cosines**, and **intensity** are defined in a user supplied file.
- The file extension may be either DAT or SDF and the file must be placed in the **<data>\Objects\Sources\Source Files** folder (see “Folders”).
- The file format may be either **text** or **binary**, both formats are in Help File.

We will see both formats.

Example 8: How to use LED (a binary source file)

LED manufacturers (such as Osram Opto Semiconductors) distribute comprehensive ray-tracing data files to be used in optical simulations such as

eulumdat file,
ray file and
spectrum file.

- In principle, LED is considered as a point source in **eulumdat file** which is used for a quick analysis.
- **The ray file** represents actual spatial and angular distribution of rays originating from the outer surface of LED. Therefore, ray files can be used in more realistic simulations.
- The spectral distribution of LED (wavelengths emitted and corresponding weights) are stored in **spectrum files**.

Two types (White and IR) of LED provided by Osram Company will be presented.

[If possible, show ray files and eulumdat files]

Examples:

- **LUW H9GP** a white LED having color temperature of 6500 K.
- **SFH 4718A** which is an IR LED whose peak irradiance is at 850 nm

After downloading LED's simulation files, you should copy and paste files to the related folders:

Put Geometry files (igs or step) in

C:\<ZEMAX>\Objects\CAD Files

Put Spectrum files must be in

C:\<ZEMAX>\Objects\Sources\Spectrum Files

Put Ray files in

C:\<ZEMAX>\Objects\Sources\Source Files

Example 9: Simple LED Collimator

We will use the LED (SFH4718A) placed at (0,0,0), a collimating plano-convex lens and a detector. In the lecture, I will show you both rectangular and polar detectors.

Standard Lens

Z pos = 4 mm (can be variable)

Clear1=Edge1=Clear2=Edge2 = 6 mm

Thickness = 6 mm

Radius2 = -6 mm

Conic2 = 0 mm

Detector

Z pos = 100 mm

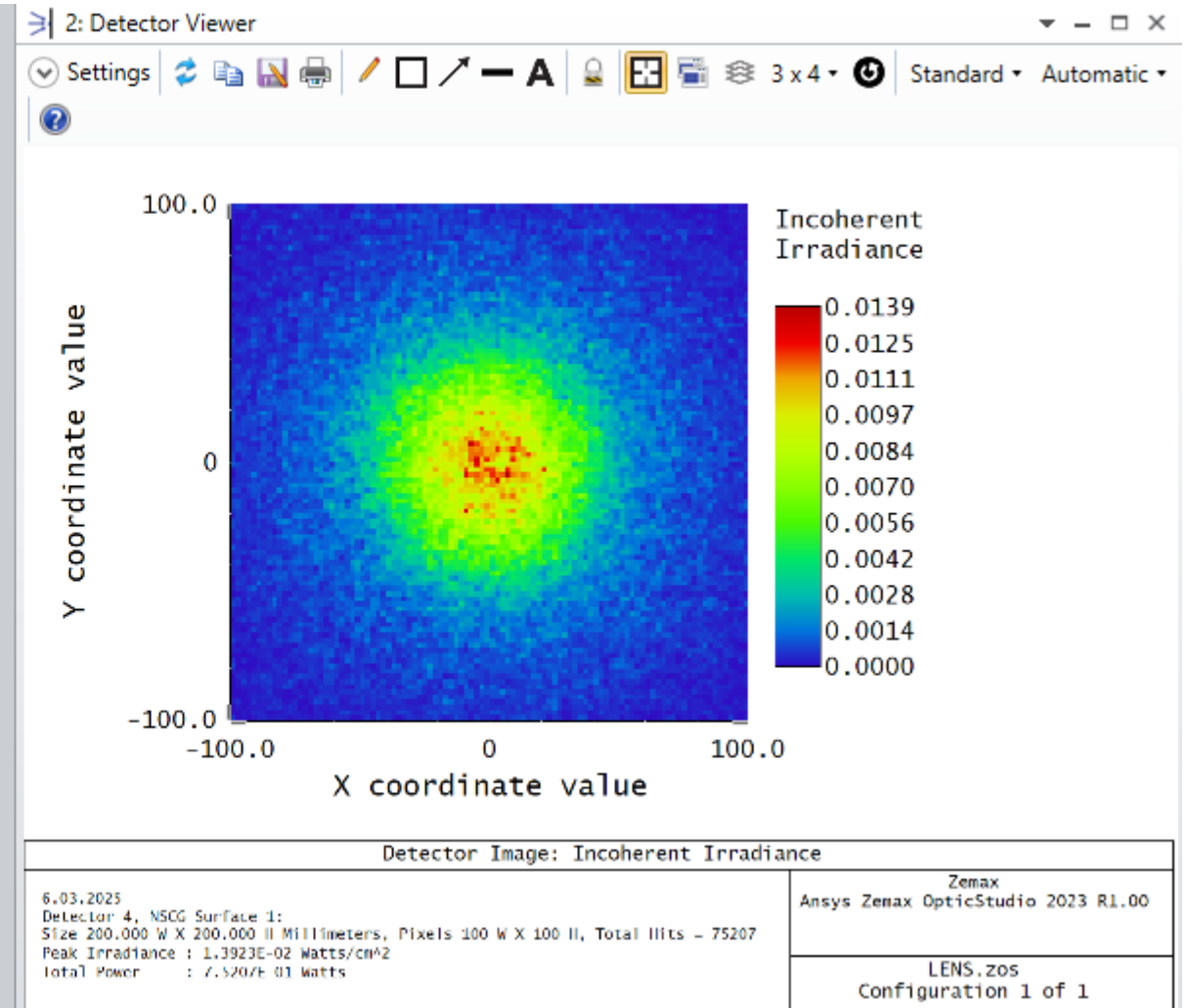
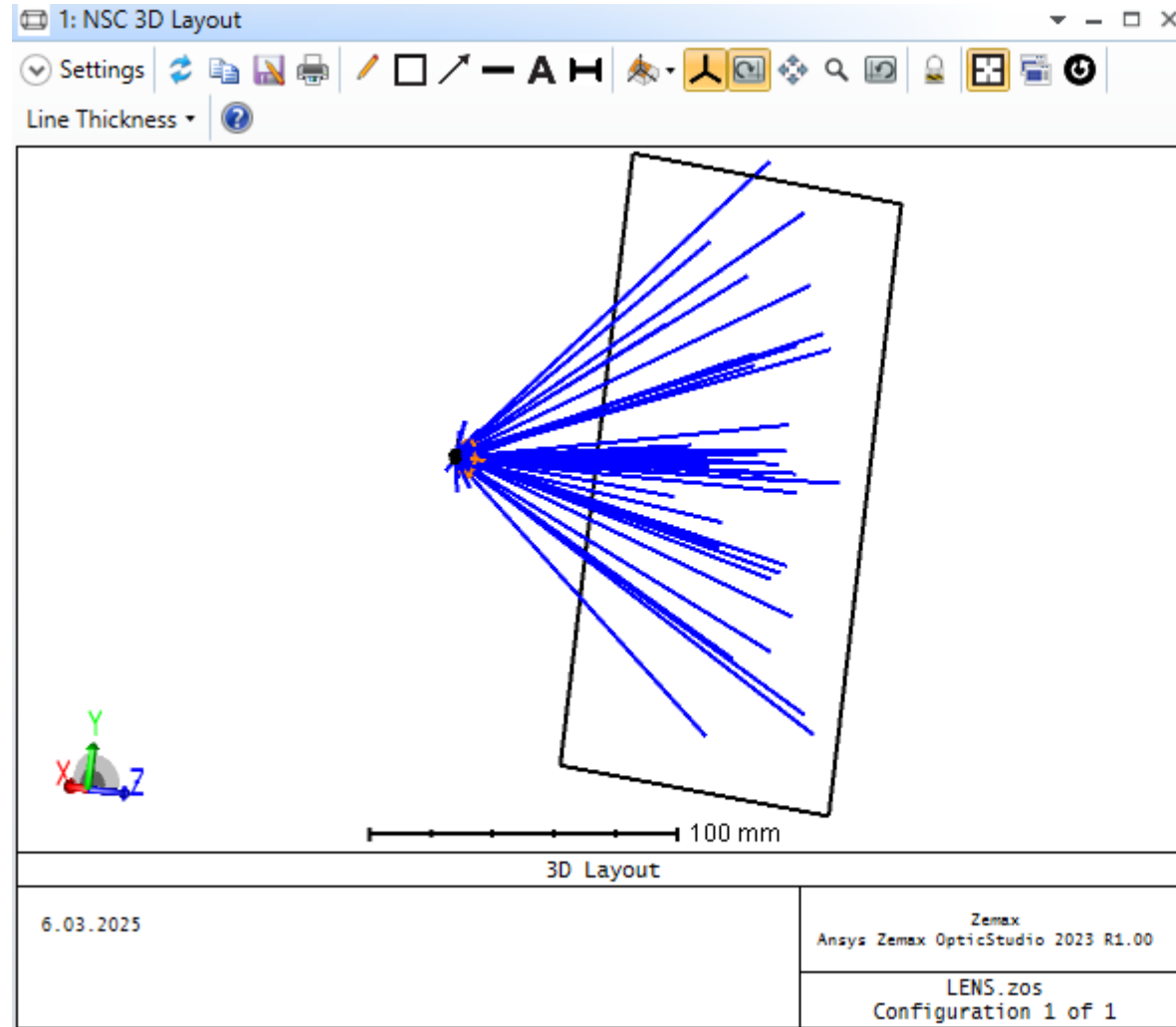
X-Y Half Width = 100 mm

X-Y Pixel # = 100

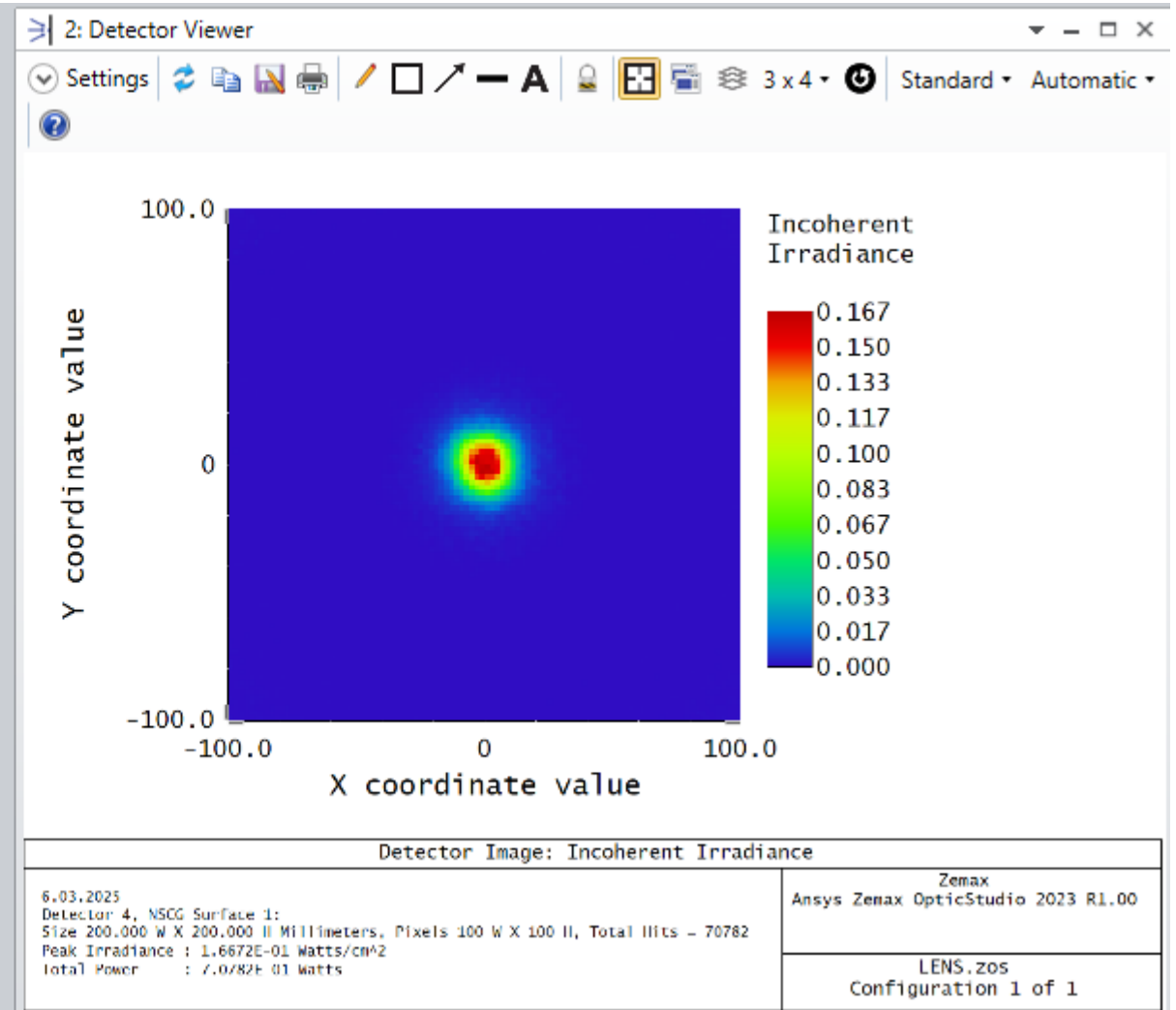
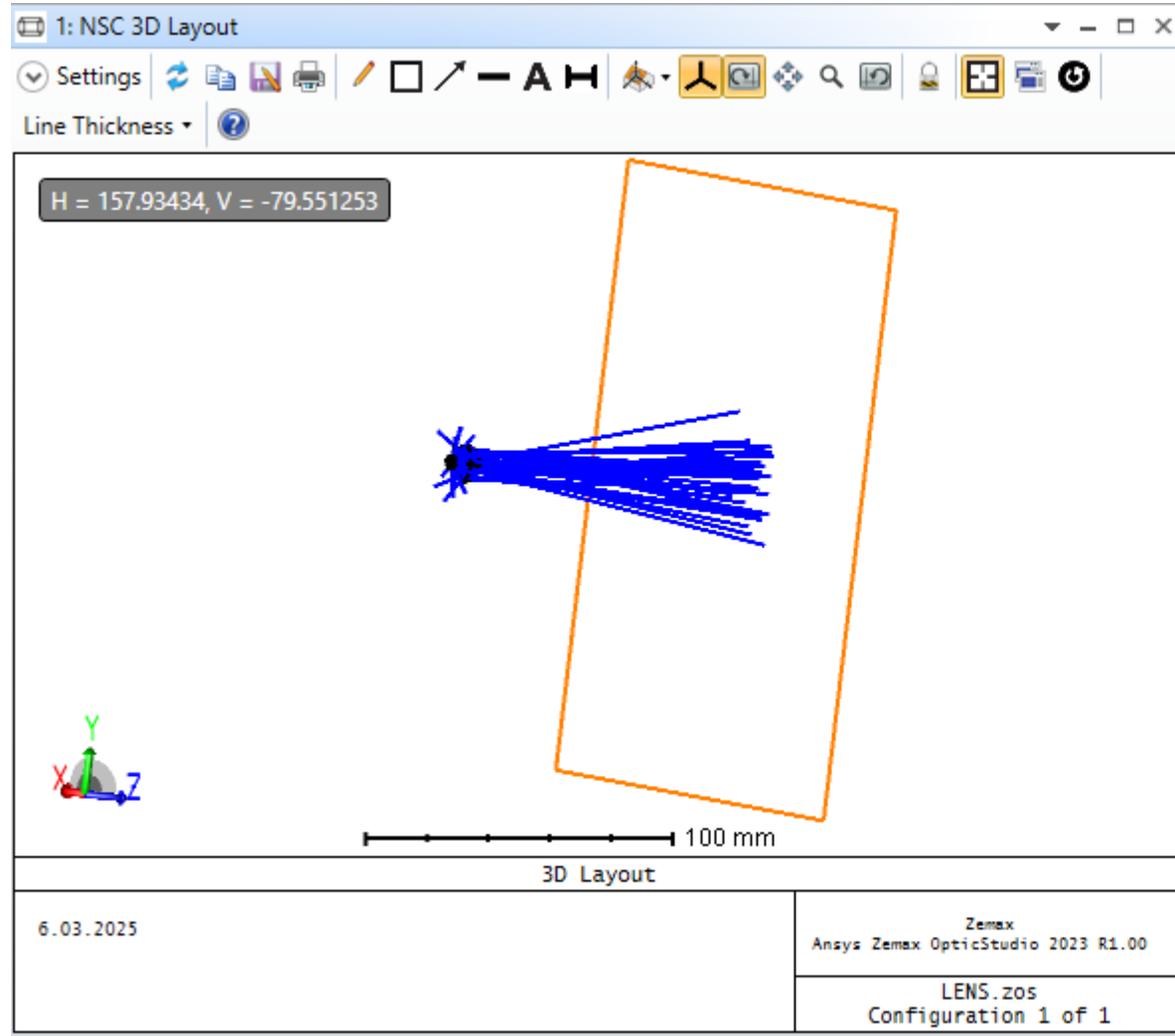
	Object Type	Comment	Ref	Insi	X Position	Y Position	Z Position	Tilt About X	Tilt About Y	Tilt About Z	Material	Radius 1	Conic 1	Clear 1	Edge 1
1	CAD Part: STEP/IGES/SAT ▾	SFH_4718A_20220909_geometry.STEP	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		1.000	1	5	5
2	Source File ▾	rayfile_SFH_4718A_100k_20220909_Zemax.DAT	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	-	50	1E+05	1.000	0
3	Standard Lens ▾		0	0	0.000	0.000	4.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	PMMA	0.000	0.000	6.000	6.000
4	Detector Rectangle ▾		0	0	0.000	0.000	100.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		100.000	100.000	100	100

Merit Function Editor												
Wizards and Operands												
Merit Function: 14.3097833683746												
	Type	Surf	Det#	Pix#	Data	# Ignored	Spatial Frequency		Target	Weight	Value	% Contrib
1	NSDD ▾	1	0	0	0	0	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
2	NSTR ▾	1	0	0	0	0	1.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
3	NSDD ▾	1	4	-9	0	1	0.000		0.000	1.000	14.310	100.000

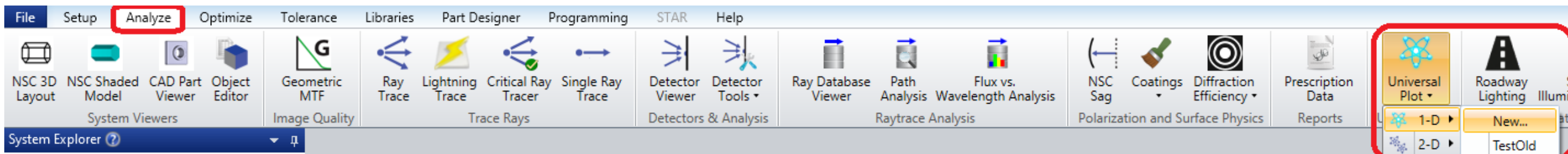
Without collimating lens



With collimating lens



Universal Plot



3: Universal Plot 1D

Settings

Independent Variable X

NSC Data Z Position Object: 3: Standard Lens

Start Value: 1 Stop Value: 10

Steps: 15

Dependent Variable Y

Operand: Merit Line: 3. NSDD

Minimum Plot Value 0 Maximum Plot Value 0

Plot Title: Universal Plot

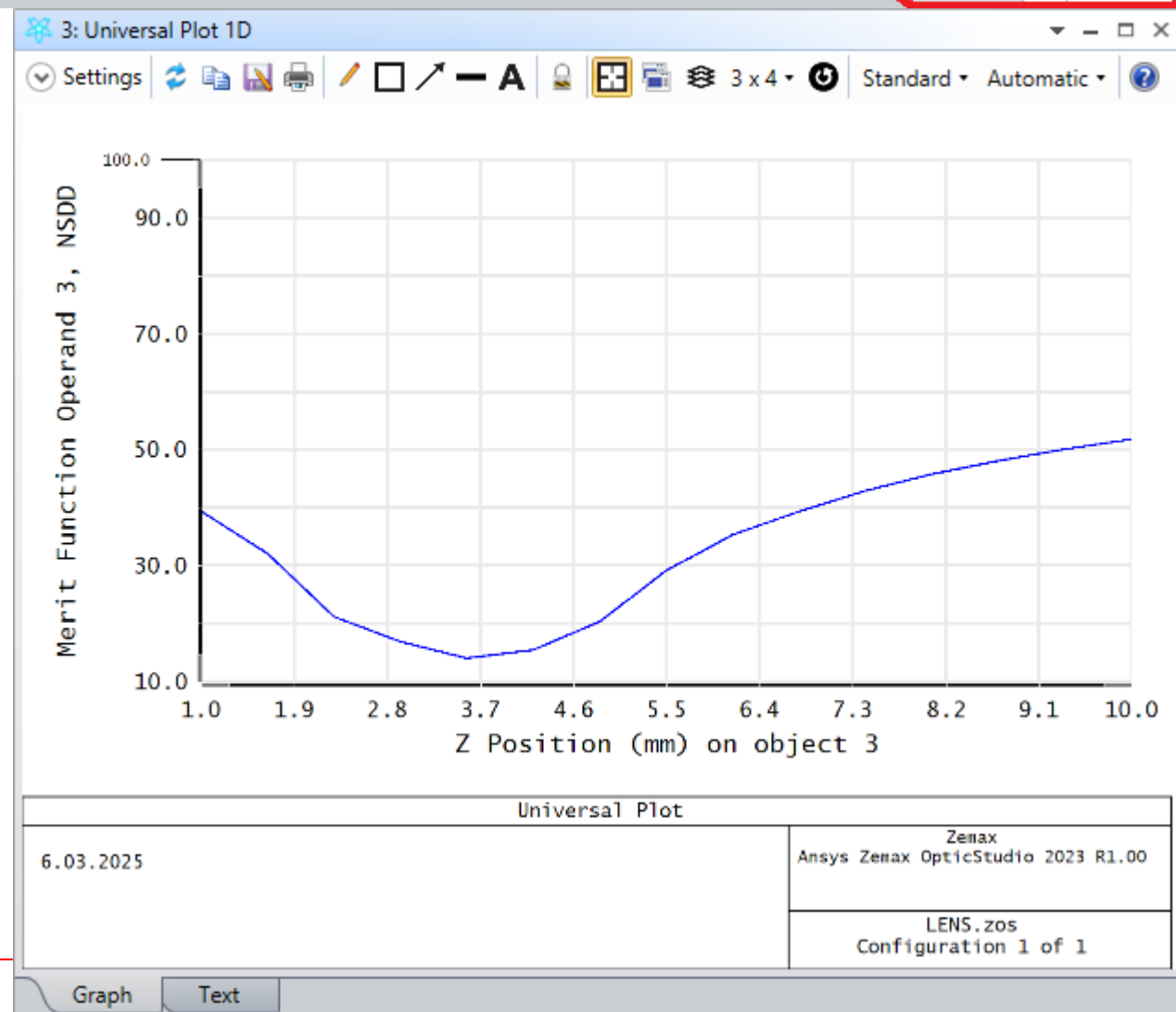
Save As New Universal Plot

Load From -> None

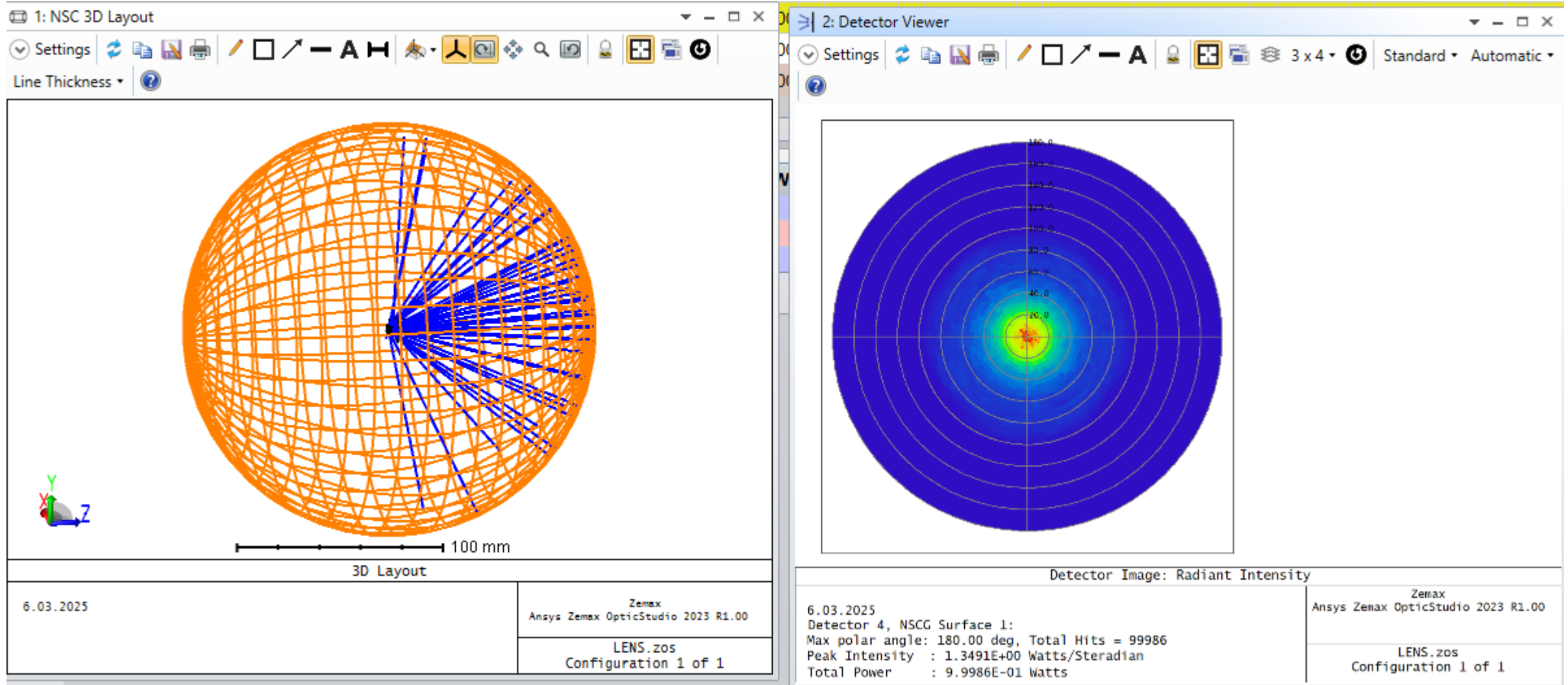
☐ Auto Apply Apply OK Cancel Save Load Reset

2023 R1.00

LENS.zos
Configuration 1 of 1



Polar detector



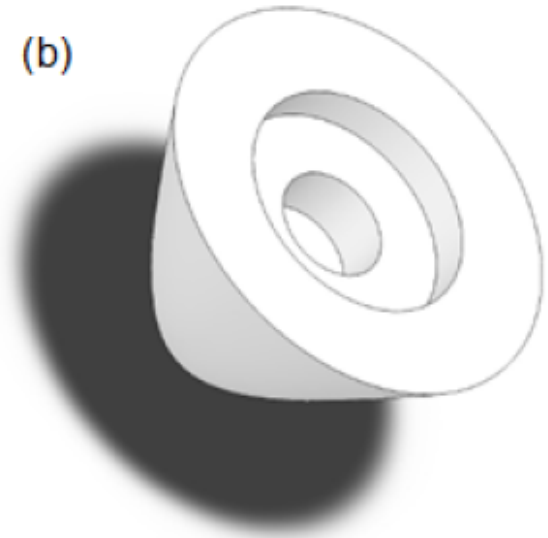
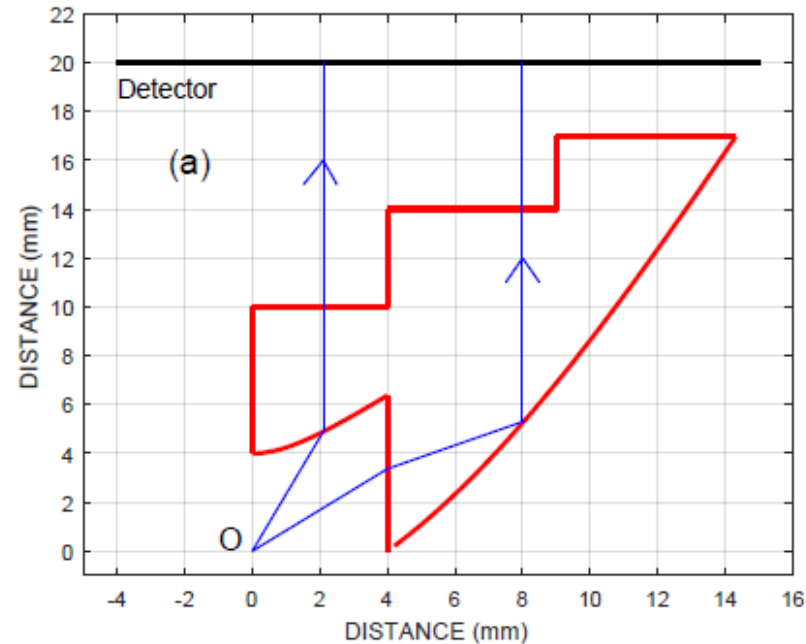
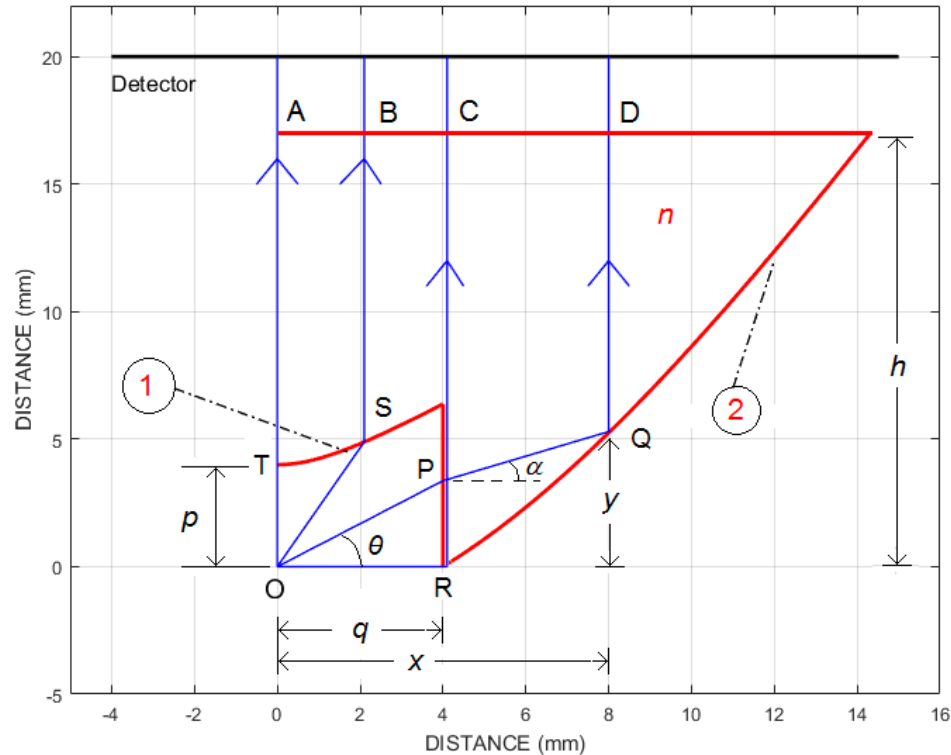
Example 10: How to use Pre-designed Freeform Lens

In this example, you will see adding a specific lens designed first in **Matlab**.

Solid model of the lens is then produced via **SolidWorks** program.

Osram SFH 4718A IR LED used to test.

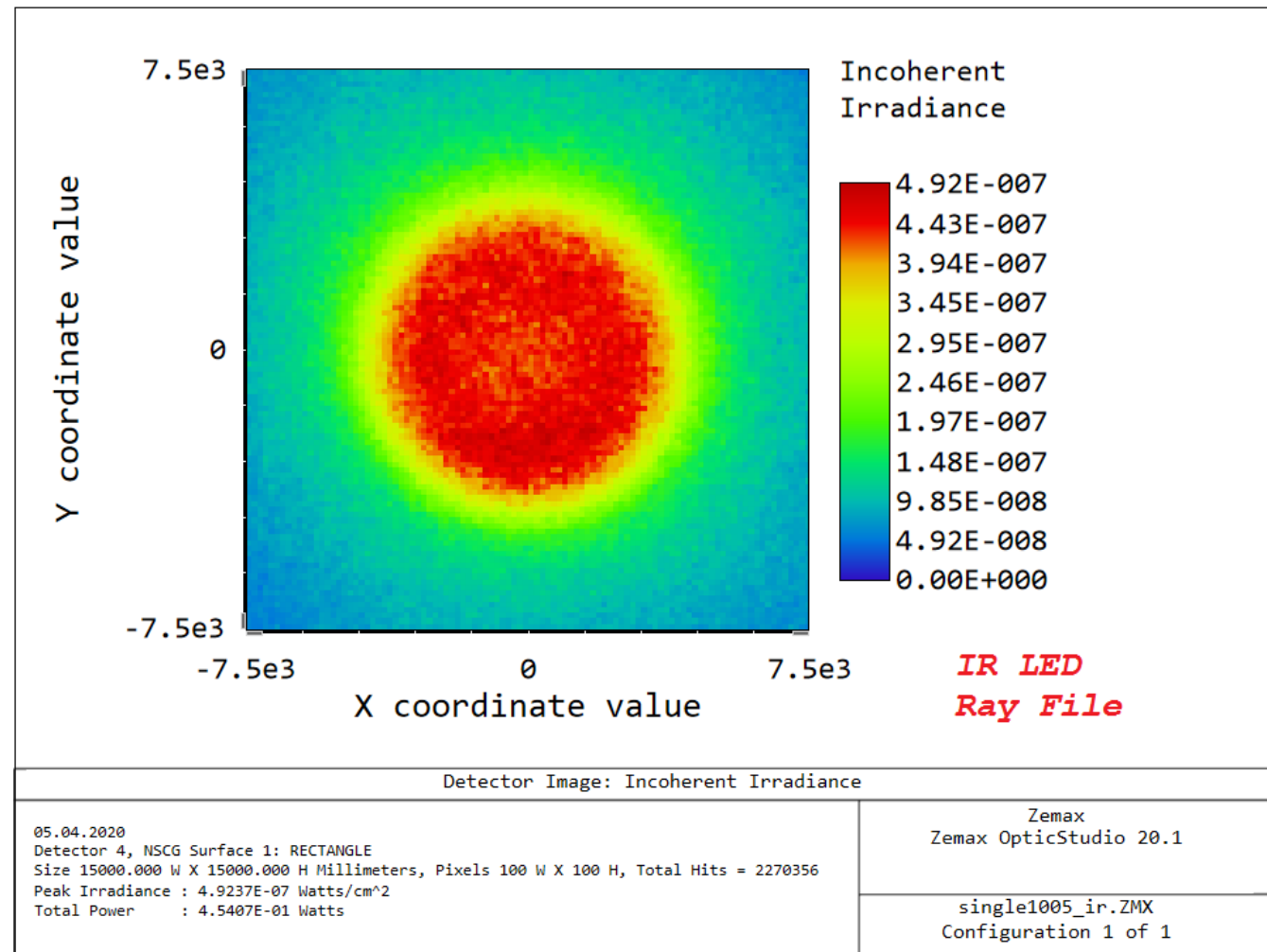
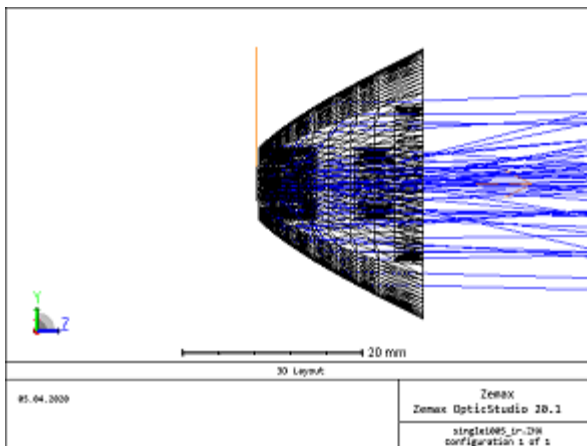
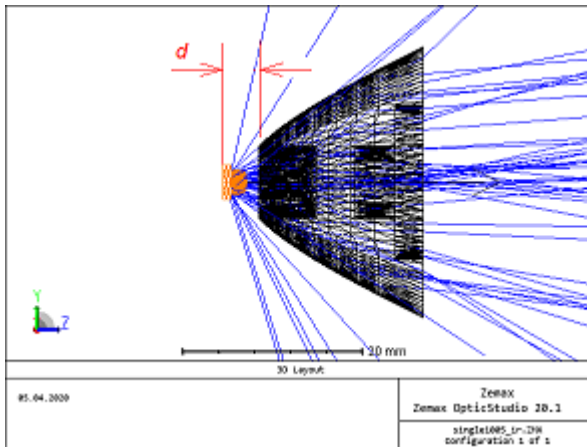
This was a TUBITAK 1005 Project (118M568).



You can download **pmmaLEDcollimator-small.stp** the file from the course web page.

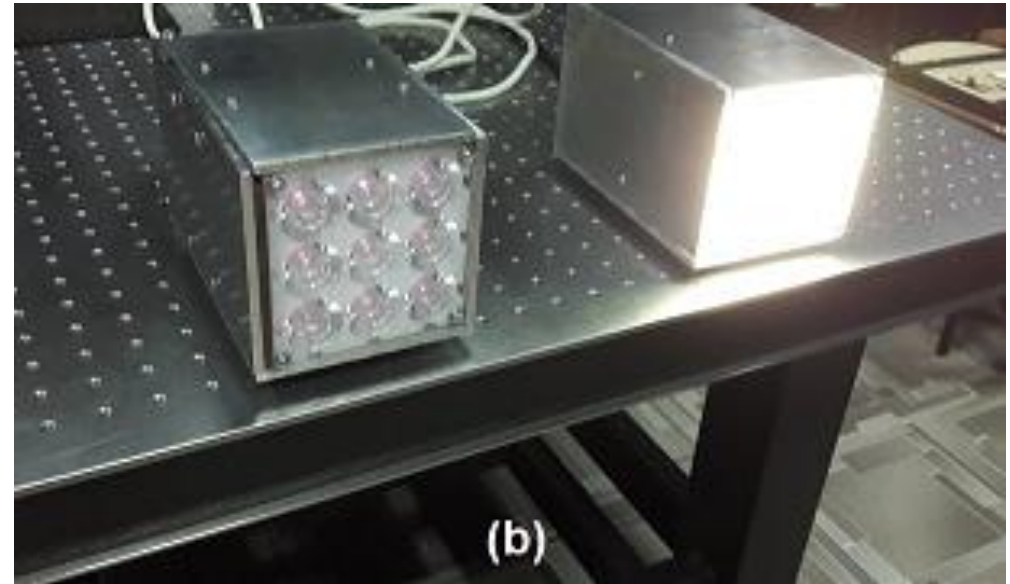
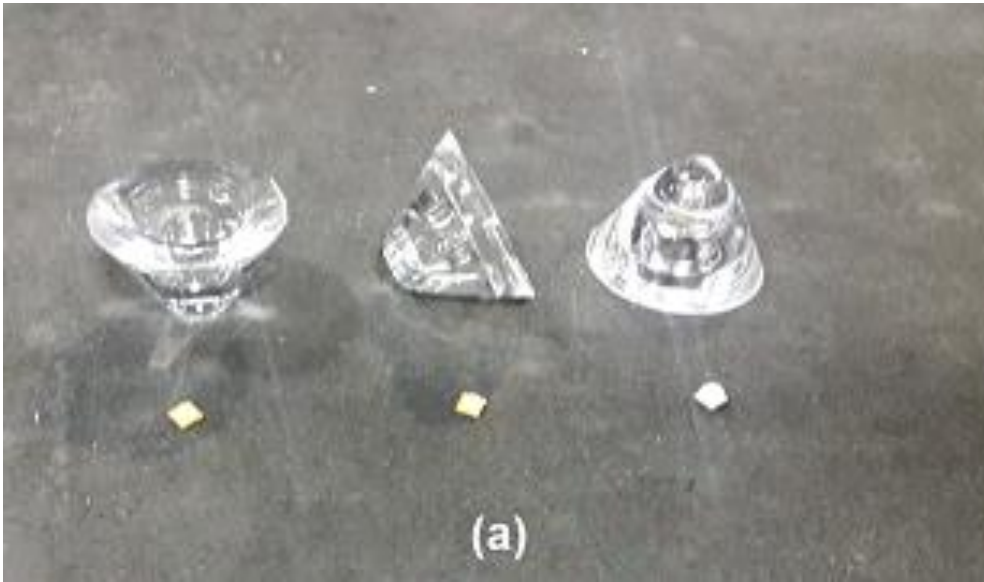
The lens file must be placed under:

C:\<ZEMAX>\Objects\CAD Files

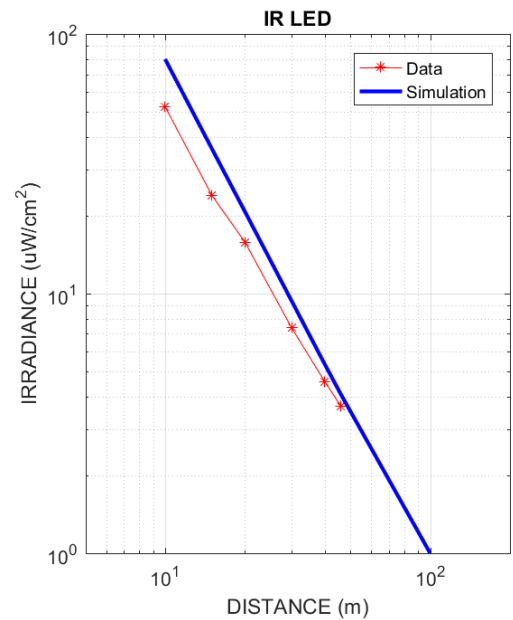
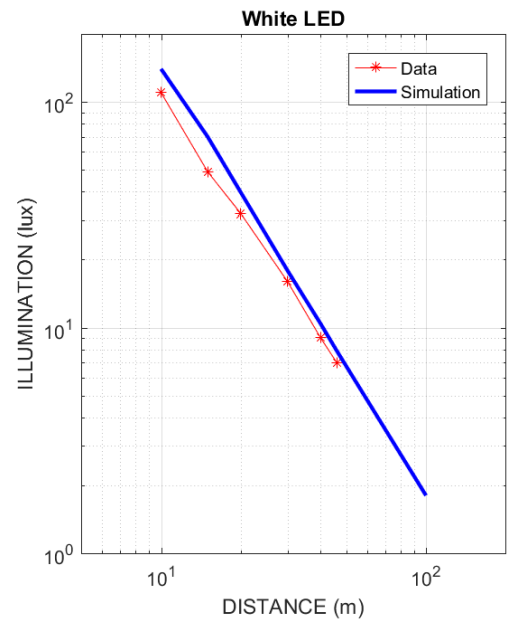
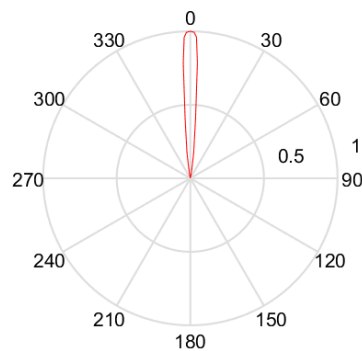
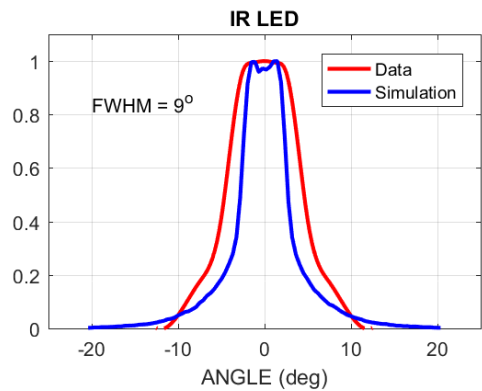
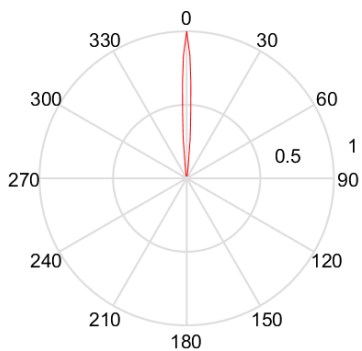
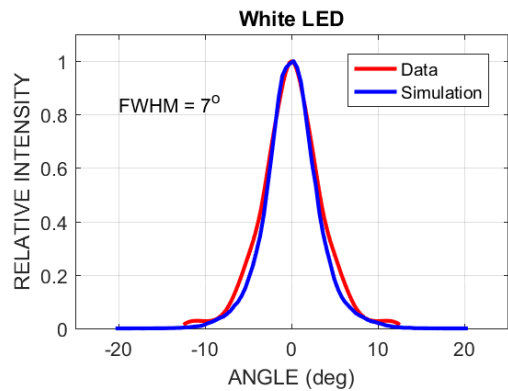


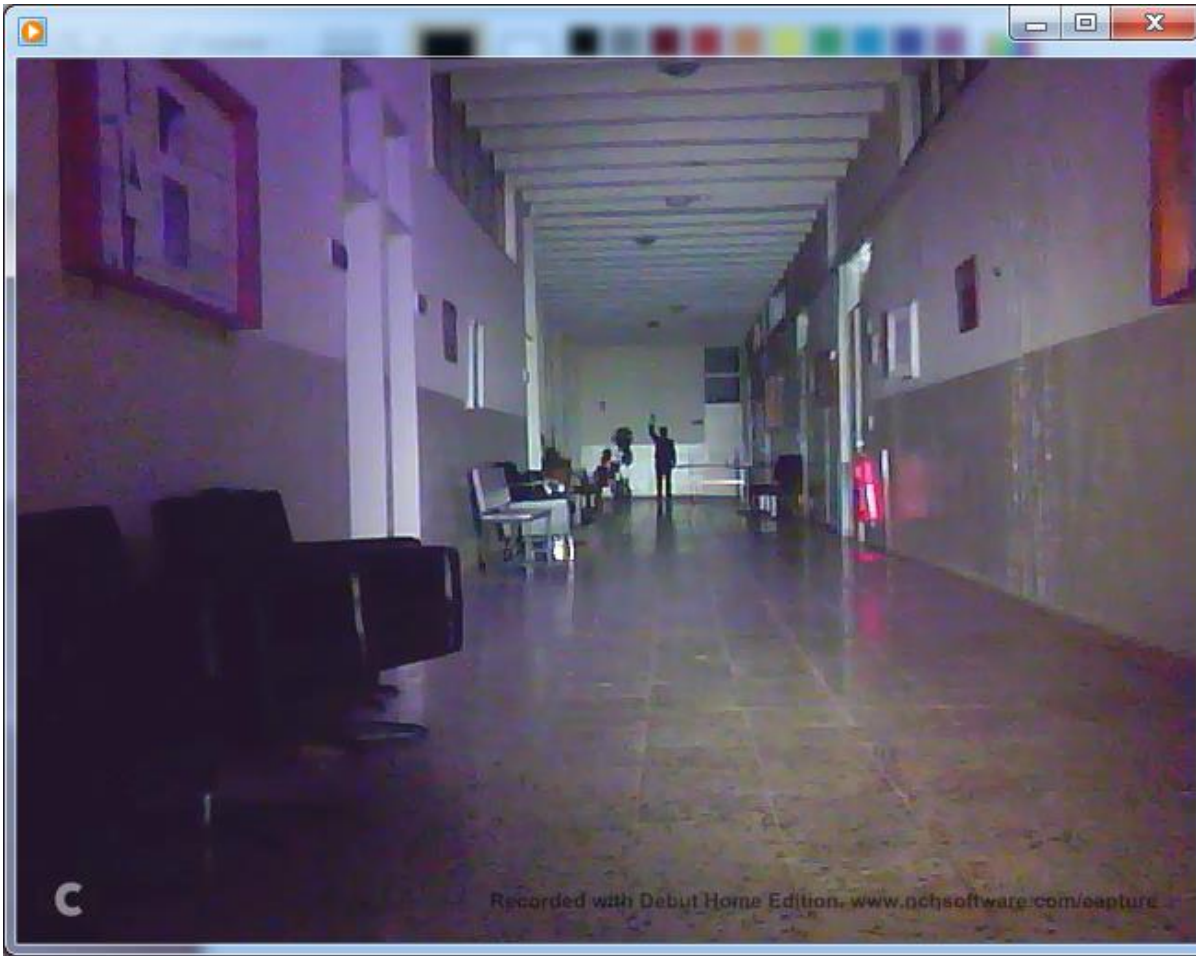
Manufacturing the lens

A prototype of a solid free-form lens is manufactured by using PMMA via plastic injection molding method.



Optical Performance

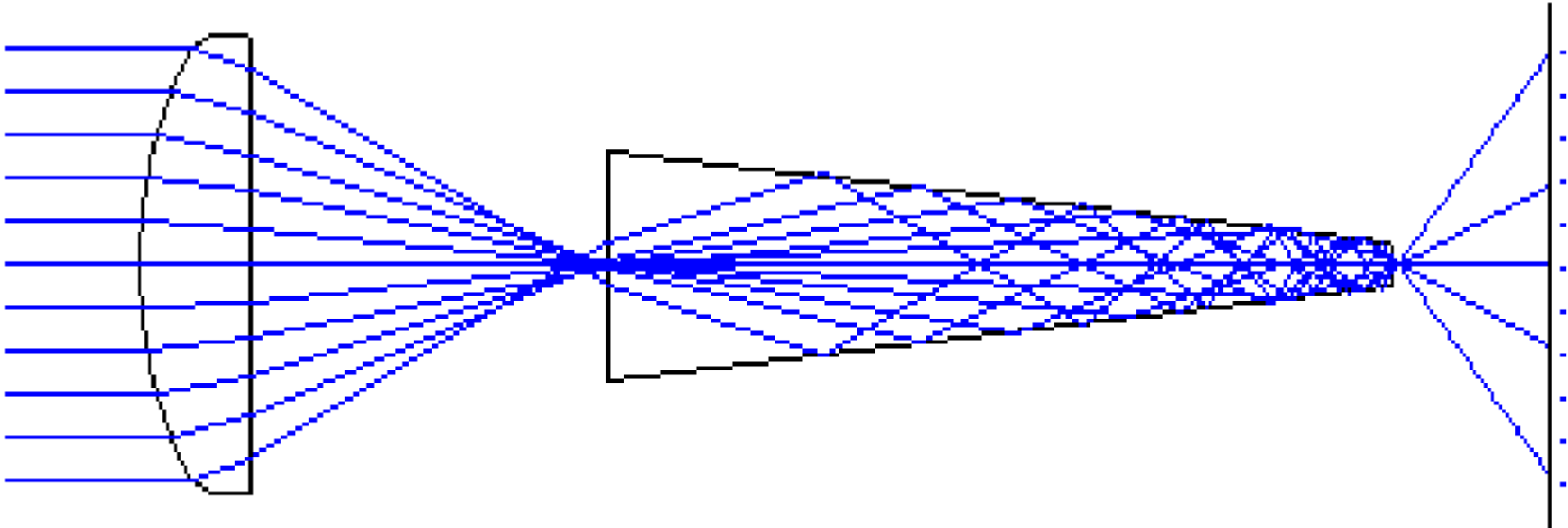
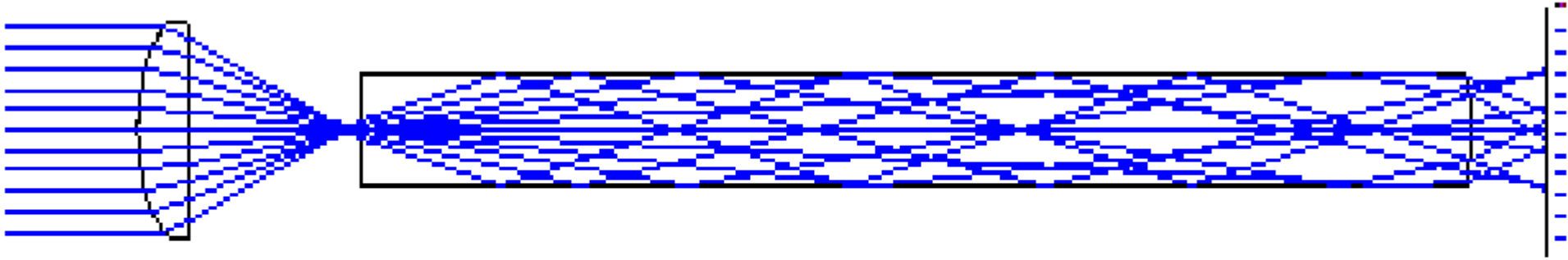




*50 m uzunluğundaki karanlık bir koridorun aydınlatılması.
Solda görünür bölge ve sağda sadece kızılötesi aydınlatma yapılmıştır.*

Ayrıca bkz: <http://www1.gantep.edu.tr/~bingul/irwalk.gif>

Example 11: Light Pipes



Example 12: Hybrid Mode in Zemax

	Surface Type	Comment	Radius	Thickness	Material	Coating	Clear Semi-Di	Chip Zone	Mech Sem	Conic
0	Standard ▾		Infinity	10.000			0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
1	Standard ▾		5.185	5.000	BK7		5.000 U	0.000	5.000	-2.306
2	Standard ▾		Infinity	10.000			5.000 U	0.000	5.000	0.000
3	Non-Sequential Component ▾		Infinity	-			5.000 U	-	-	0.000
4	Standard ▾		Infinity	1.000			5.000 U	0.000	5.000	0.000
5	Standard ▾		Infinity	5.000	BK7		5.000 U	0.000	5.000	0.000
6	Standard ▾		-10.000	18.000			5.000 U	0.000	5.000	0.000
7	Standard ▾		Infinity	-			1.817 U	0.000	1.817	0.000

	Object Type	Comment	Ref Object	Inside Of	X Position	Y Position	Z Position	Tilt About X	Tilt About Y	Tilt About Z	Material	Scale
1	Polygon Object ▾	Prism45.POB	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	BK7	4.000
2	Polygon Object ▾	Prism45.POB	0	0	0.000	10.000	8.000	180.000	0.000	0.000	BK7	4.000

