

University at Buffalo
State University of New York

Department of Computer Science and Engineering

December 15, 2015

Graduate Admissions Committee
Re: applicant Ningji Wei

Dear Graduate Admissions Committee:

I am delighted to provide a reference for Mr. Ningji Wei. I have known him as a student in my Fall 2015 graduate course “CSE596: Intro Theory of Computation.” He is completing a Master’s in Industrial Engineering and this is his first term taking CS courses, “CSE531: Algorithms” being the other. I am an Associate Professor with long service at UB.

Mr. Wei earned an A in CSE596, including a powerful 96% on yesterday’s final exam which is nominally A+ on my curve. He may be the class topper over numerous PhD-intending students in our department after all scores are tallied. He also asked the best questions in lecture, ones of general value for the rest of the class, and I’ve often had him post them to our *Piazza*-based forum so I can expand on my in-class answers.

I should say that he started out asking me “TCS-newbie”-type questions after class or in office hours, but (a) small wonder since he’s new to CS overall, and (b) that tendency was gone by October 1. Now his first questions to me about assignments are, say, about the extra-credit thing I put on the last problem on the second-last assignment which could have been original research 20 years ago...—and which he solved in a 5-page mini-paper in impeccable 11-point LaTeX with multicolor vector-graphics typeset illustrations. So although I have not had the kind of research-level discussions I’ve had with others of our own second-year theory students, I can vouch for his capability and creativity in research contexts. (I know mine is a “4th letter”; I know a junior colleague of Mark Karwan who has worked with Wei thinks highly of his research ability.)

His English is strong in speaking as well as writing. I would not be able to tell that he hasn’t grown up in the NYC area. In sum I can give him my highest recommendation and I will be happy to answer any further questions you may have.

Yours sincerely

Dr. Kenneth W. Regan