

# Standardized Client Initiative

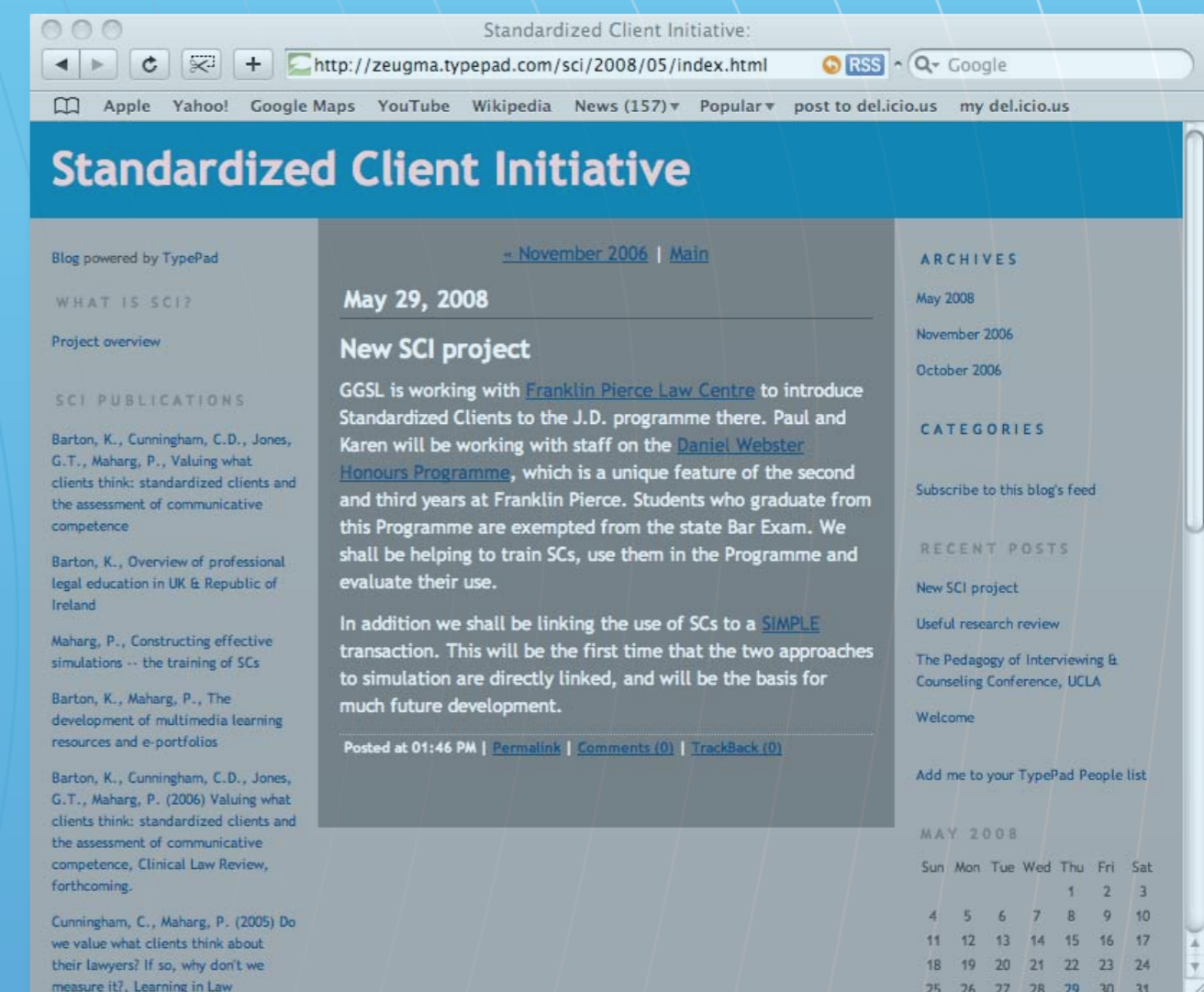
## Background

The Standardised Client Initiative at the Glasgow Graduate School of Law (GGSL) is an ambitious attempt to change the way lawyer-client communication skills are taught and assessed. GGSL is the site for a series of pilot projects testing whether the use of standardised clients (SCs) would be more valid, reliable and cost-effective than the current approach, widely used in many law schools, with client roles played by students and assessment based on law teacher review of the interview videotape.

## Project Partners

An international project has been formed which involves:

- The Glasgow Graduate School of Law at Strathclyde;
- The Clinical Skills Centre, Medical Faculty, Dundee University;
- The College of Law in England and Wales;
- The Effective Lawyer Client Communication Project in the Law School at Georgia State University, USA.



## Project aims

1. Collate and update pre-existing research on standardised patients (SPs) and clients (SCs) across a range of disciplines and professions.
2. Research the use of SCs in the education of law students, trainees and lawyers through a series of pilots in the Glasgow Graduate School of Law and other law schools across the world.
3. Produce a body of resources that will enable staff in law schools and other legal educational centres to develop their own SC programmes, in both undergraduate and postgraduate legal education.

## Project conclusions

1. Culminated in January 2006 with a graded interviewing exercise that students must pass in order eventually to be eligible for a law license.
2. Over 250 students conducted this exercise and the SC assessments were analyzed and compared with law teachers' evaluations of the interview videotapes.
3. The results strongly indicated that assessment by SCs was sufficiently valid and reliable to be used for a high-stakes examination in legal education.
4. As a direct result of this project, the way lawyer skills are taught and assessed is undergoing fundamental change not only at GGSL but elsewhere in the UK, USA and Japan.

### There's a need for the SCs to calibrate:

- Body language
- Tone of voice
- Attitudinal swings
- Dealing with the lawyer's open questions...
- Improvising on closed questions...
- Performance analysis

### And to:

- Be aware of orientation towards lawyer at first sight
- Respond congruently to the lawyer
- Consult the internal 'invigilator'...

## Training to assess

## Training to role-play



### PART A: Global Rating

1. The greeting and introduction by the student lawyer was appropriate	1	2	3	4	5
2. I felt the student lawyer listened to me	1	2	3	4	5
3. The student lawyer approach to questioning was helpful	1	2	3	4	5
4. The student lawyer accurately summarised my situation	1	2	3	4	5
5. I understood what the student lawyer was saying	1	2	3	4	5
6. I felt comfortable with the student lawyer	1	2	3	4	5
7. I would feel confident with the student lawyer dealing with my situation	1	2	3	4	5
8. If I had a new legal problem I would come back to this student lawyer	1	2	3	4	5

### PART B: Case Specific Checklist (Specify 'Yes' or 'No' to each item on the list)

1. Asked for your full name
2. Asked for your full address
3. Asked for [deleted]
4. Asked for [deleted]
5. Asked for [deleted]
6. Asked if [deleted]
7. Asked for details of estate

## Funding

- \$10,000 from the Lee Burge Foundation
- £10,000 from the College of Law
- £10,000 from the Clark Foundation

## Would Standardised Clients work in your discipline?

If you are interested in exploring potential joint projects contact:

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