

Academic Case Study

# How Clemson University Used Scite To Enable Academic Conversational Search & Drive Student Engagement





**800+**  
Users

**13,000+**  
Prompts Submitted

**4,900+**  
Reports Viewed

## Challenge

### Ethical AI Use in an Evolving Academic Landscape

In early 2023, Clemson librarians and subject specialists noticed a rise in questions about references and citations for non-existent publications. This prompted them to establish an informal library group to explore and address the implications of AI in teaching and learning.

They had several questions, such as: How do we help students navigate a world increasingly influenced by GenAI tools? How do we engage with vendors to proactively assess and trial GenAI tools? And what will GenAI mean for the already challenging situation of exponential growth in scientific publications?

## The Solution

### Driving A New Era of Conversational Search

To address these challenges, Clemson Libraries implemented Scite, an AI-powered research platform, following a successful trial in the summer of 2023.

The one-month trial attracted 90+ unique users, which led to 900+ sessions. Scite's features, including Smart Citations, contextual citation insights, and an AI assistant, provided scalable, user-friendly solutions for academic research. The platform was introduced with a strong emphasis on fostering engagement, streamlining workflows, and ensuring academic integrity. Clemson Libraries also promoted Scite through the creation of a Research Guide and several presentations, familiarizing users with the platform's functionalities and demonstrating its ability to meet the university's evolving teaching and research demands.



# Results

## Scite's Impact At Clemson

Scite's adoption at Clemson University produced measurable outcomes across several dimensions:

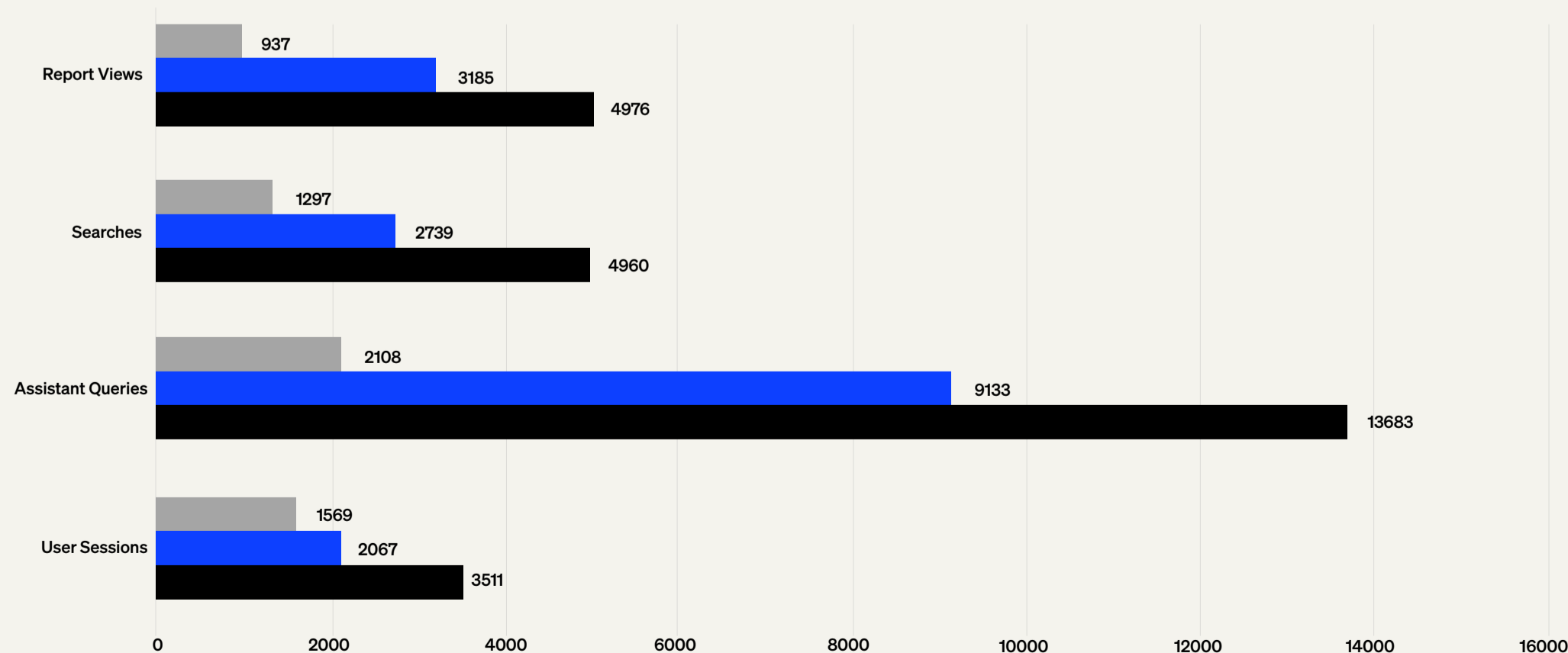
### Increased Engagement

Clemson Libraries overcame initial barriers to engagement by introducing an intuitive and efficient research platform. Active users of Scite grew from 270 in December 2023 to 544 in April 2024 and over 830 by December 2024. The platform's AI-powered Scite Assistant has processed over 13,600 prompts or queries during the Clemson implementation, helping students and faculty simplify literature discovery and explore research topics efficiently. Detailed citation reports, viewed over 4,970 times, offered actionable insights, further enhancing user experience and engagement.



### Diverse User Base

Scite successfully reached a broad spectrum of students and faculty, addressing the university's challenge of meeting diverse academic needs. Undergraduate students, who made up 31% of users, used Scite for foundational research in fields such as psychology, construction science, and computer science. Graduate students, representing 43% of users, leveraged Scite's advanced features for in-depth research in disciplines such as business administration and wildlife biology. Scite's flexibility and accessibility helped overcome disciplinary silos, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration across Clemson's academic community.



DEC 15, 2023  
MAY 15, 2024  
DEC 15, 2024

<sup>1</sup><https://libraries.clemson.edu/news/clemson-libraries-invites-feedback-on-ai-tool-used-to-evaluate-scientific-articles/>

“At the Clemson Teaching Excellence Conference 2024: Teaching in the Age of AI, participants asked about campus-wide subscription to **AI-enhanced tools** that can help with **learning** and **research** activities. **Scite** is an example of those types of resources available to everyone at Clemson. Leveraging AI technologies ethically and responsibly has the potential to transform and tailor **learning** and **research** experiences.”



**Elias Tzoc**

Associate dean for teaching, learning, and research at Clemson University



## The Institution

Clemson University, established in 1889, is a premier public land-grant research university located in Clemson, South Carolina. With a strong commitment to academic excellence and community impact, Clemson is recognized as the second-largest university in South Carolina, serving nearly 29,000 students, 80% of whom are undergraduates.

The university is known for its dynamic learning environment, cutting-edge research, and strategic focus on innovation.

## Enhanced Research Experience

Clemson Libraries also contended with a growing issue of fabricated references and the need for tools that ensure research reliability. Scite solved this challenge by offering Smart Citations and contextual insights, empowering users to validate and interpret references accurately. The platform streamlined research workflows and improved confidence in sources, with faculty and graduate students rating it highly at 4.57 out of 5 during the one-month summer trial. By addressing the reliability challenge, Scite has transformed how students and researchers approach their work, fostering efficiency and academic integrity.

## Strategic Alignment With Institutional Goals

The adoption of Scite reflected Clemson University's commitment to integrating innovative technologies while upholding ethical standards. By aligning with the Clemson Elevate strategic plan, the platform supported the university's goals to deliver the No. 1 student experience in the nation and Double Research Expenditures by 2035. Scite's scalability and adaptability ensured it met Clemson's dynamic academic needs, reinforcing the university's position as a leader in academic innovation.

## Looking Ahead

Clemson Libraries, in close collaboration with other campus groups such as the Office of Teaching Effectiveness and Innovation and the Center for Career and Professional Development, plans to expand the reach of AI tools and resources. This will be achieved through ongoing presentations and workshops, collaboration with AI faculty champions, and outreach to campus-wide audiences.

The university remains committed to leveraging AI technologies ethically and responsibly to address evolving academic challenges and enhance learning experiences. By adopting Scite, Clemson University has positioned itself at the forefront of integrating AI into academia. This initiative not only enhances research quality and reliability but also empowers students and faculty to excel in the digital age.



## Contact Us

USA Phone: +1 (310) 477 0354  
 Europe Phone: +49 (221) 169 125 83  
[sales@researchsolutions.com](mailto:sales@researchsolutions.com)  
[www.researchsolutions.com](http://www.researchsolutions.com)

<sup>2</sup><https://clemson.libguides.com/scite>

<sup>3</sup><https://www.clemson.edu/elevate/>