In spite of the frequent coverage in the New York Times, Chronicle of Higher Education, Publishers Weekly, Inside Higher Ed, and on listservs, websites, scholarly journal articles and beyond, the information and advice filtering down to graduate students, assistant professors, and even published authors at higher ranks has failed to keep up with the very rapid pace of change in scholarly publishing. Most faculty are unaware of how open access, consortia of presses selling e-books to libraries, the decline of bookstores both chain and independent, cutbacks in library funding, competition of book sales with expensive journal purchases by libraries, decline of review media, and general lack of funding in academia are affecting their prospects in finding an appropriate publisher and the kind of offers that might be made after successful review of manuscripts. If they also are approaching publishers for the first time, they need advice about how to do that successfully. Discount schedules, “crossover books,” and what it takes to reach so-called general or interdisciplinary readers are topics that few authors truly understand. The finances of e-books mystify many. Publishers need the help of faculty to publicize and promote their books in ways that were not previously needed, and more than ever before, they prefer to publish books by academics highly active in their fields. These are some of the issues Mitchner will address in her visit with faculty and students at UCSB.

Leslie Mitchner is the Associate Director and Editor in Chief at Rutgers University Press, where she has been acquiring books in numerous fields (film and media studies, Latino/a studies, American studies, art history, African American studies, women’s and gender studies, Asian American studies, and more) for over thirty years. She oversees a department that has strong publication lists in anthropology, sociology, Jewish studies, human rights, childhood studies, higher education, criminology, and clinical health and medicine. A frequent participant on panels at national conferences and a guest speaker on many campuses (including Williams College, Dickinson College, Connecticut State University, Stony Brook University, Boston College, NYU, Virginia Tech, San Francisco State University) she gives talks to large and small groups of faculty on the constant changes in publishing and, often, in individual meetings helps scholars find appropriate publishers for their work. She has published articles in Cinema Journal and Scholarly Publishing.