

Damla Isik, Ph.D.

Professor of Anthropology
Regis University, Denver, CO



Summary of Qualifications

A highly accomplished and strategic leader and educator with over 17 years of experience in higher education, including significant administrative experience as a department chair and program leader. Proven ability to lead diverse teams, manage complex academic programs, and drive strategic initiatives. Expertise in curriculum development, faculty oversight, and institutional service with a strong record of success in interdisciplinary collaboration, program assessment, and global education.

Administrative and Leadership Experience

Chair, Department of Anthropology, Sociology, and Criminology | Regis University, Denver, CO | 2018–2022

- Managed and led a department of six full-time (tenured and tenure-track) faculty, along with multiple adjuncts, term faculty, and visiting faculty members.
- **Strategic Planning:** Developed and executed strategic plans for departmental growth and oversaw a successful merger with the School for Professional Advancement's Criminology undergraduate and graduate programs.
- **Curriculum & Program Management:** Led departmental and university level curricular changes and provided administrative support for the new Community Food Systems major/minor. Initiated and oversaw the development of a new interdisciplinary minor, "Animals, Society, and Culture," in collaboration with the Biology Department.
- **Faculty Oversight:** Managed the hiring and orientation processes for new, term, and adjunct faculty.
- **Assessment & Accreditation:** Facilitated and served as the primary contact for the development, application, and reporting of a comprehensive departmental assessment plan for accreditation purposes.

Departmental and University Leadership and Governance | Regis University & Western Connecticut State University | 2007–Present

- **Elected Member, Rank and Tenure Committee (2022–Present):** Serves on the committee that reviews and evaluates faculty for promotion and tenure. The committee also works with the Dean and the Provost in reviewing tenure and promotion policies as well as conducting faculty workshops, one-on-one meetings and guidance on promotion and tenure.

- **Chair, Thematic Major Committee** (2014–2017): Led university-wide curricular initiatives.
- **Co-Chair, University Planning and Budget Committee** (2009–2011): Contributed to university-wide financial planning and resource allocation.
- **Co-Chair, Honors Committee** (2008–2011): Guided the direction of the university's Honors program.
- **Elected Member, College Curriculum & Core Committee** (2012–2015): Participated in the review and evaluation of academic programs.
- **Senate Representative** (2014–2017 & 2008–2011): Served as the elected departmental representative in the University Senate.
- **Academic Integrity Board Member** (2015–2017): Served on the board that addressed academic misconduct.
- **Elected Member, Program Review Committee** (2008–2011): Participated in the review and evaluation of academic programs.
- **Elected Member, Faculty Development Committee** (2012–2017): Provided guidance and support for faculty professional growth.

Program & Interdisciplinary Leadership | Regis University & Western Connecticut State University | 2007–Present

- **Campus Fulbright Committee Member** (2019–Present): Advises and mentors students on Fulbright applications. Served as an invited Fulbright Country Expert for Croatia (2019, 2018) for pre-departure orientations.
- **Steering Committee Member, Environmental Studies Program** (2012–2016): Guided the direction and development of this interdisciplinary program.
- **Chair, Women's Studies and Women's History Month Committee** (2007–2011): Organized and led programming for a university-wide initiative.
- **Member, Community for Global Commitment** (2022–Present): Participates in initiatives related to global education and inclusive education.
- **Study Abroad Advisory Committee Member** (2016–2020): Provided guidance on global education and study abroad programs.
- **Elected Member, Western International Center** (2010–2011): Contributed to the center's mission of global engagement.
- **Elected Member, Center for Culture and Values** (2007–2009).

Professional Appointments

Professor of Anthropology | Regis University, Denver, CO | 2021–Present

Fulbright Scholar | University of Plovdiv, Bulgaria & University of Zadar, Croatia | 2025, 2018

Visiting Professor | University of Macerata, Italy | 2022

Associate Professor of Anthropology | Regis University, Denver, CO | 2015–2021

Assistant Professor of Anthropology | Regis University, Denver, CO | 2011–2015

Education

Ph.D., Anthropology | University of Arizona, Tucson |

- *Minor:* Rhetoric, Composition, and the Teaching of English
- *Graduate Certificate:* Women's and Gender Studies

M.A., English Language and Literature | Ege University, Izmir, Turkey |

B.A., English Language and Literature | Bogazici University, Istanbul, Turkey |

Awards & Grants

2025	Fulbright Scholar Award for Teaching and Research, University of Plovdiv, Bulgaria
2023	Regis University Faculty Development Summer Research Grant
2023	Ignatian Pilgrimage in Spain and Rome, and Online Learning Community selected participant (co-sponsored by Regis and Creighton Universities – all expenses covered by the Mission Office of Regis University)
2022	Regis University, Dean's Excellence Fund Award for Research
2022	Visiting Professorship Program at University of Macerata
2020	Palestinian American Research Center 2020 Faculty Seminar Development Award (postponed to 2023 due to COVID) -Covered all expenses (except for airfare) for preliminary research/faculty development trip to Palestine.
2018	Fulbright Scholar Award, Croatia
2018	Regis University Faculty Development Summer Research Grant
2015	Regis University Research and Scholarship Committee Award
2013	Regis University Faculty Development Summer Research Grant
2011	Western Connecticut State University Research Award for best research within faculty. This is an annual award given to one full time faculty member per year.
2010	Connecticut State Universities. CSU/AAUP Research Grant.
2009	Connecticut State Universities. CSU/AAUP Research Grant.
2008	Connecticut State Universities. CSU/AAUP Research Grant.
2007-8	University of California, Santa Barbara. Women's Studies Program. Dissertation Scholars Teaching Fellowship Award.
2004	University of Arizona. Emil W. Haury Fund Research Grant
2004	University of Arizona. Social and Behavioral Sciences Dissertation Grant Fund

2004	University of Arizona. Honorable Mention, Edward P. Dozier Award
2003	University of Arizona. Janet Upjohn Stearns Foundation Award
2003	University of Arizona. Riecker Fellowship
2001	Nominated for Ruth Gardner Award in Excellence in Teaching
1998	Goldini Italian Cultural Center, Izmir, Turkey. Language Scholarship to attend summer school in Florence, Italy.

Courses Taught

Graduate Level Courses

- Women and Gender in the Middle East (Department of Sociology, University of Zadar, Croatia)
- Gender and Development Practice (Development Practice Program, Regis University)
- Landscape and Environmental Geography (Department of Education, Cultural Heritage, and Tourism, University of Macerata)

Anthropology, Sociology, and Criminology Major Courses – Regis University, Western Connecticut State University, and University of Arizona

- Drugs, Health, and Culture
- Anarchy and Anarchism
- Women and Gender in the Middle East
- Writing Culture
- Gender and Globalization
- Transnational Feminisms
- Food, Gender, Culture
- Animals, Culture, and Society
- Introduction to Cultural Anthropology
- Globalization, Gender, and Feminist Anthropology
- Gender, Sex, and Culture
- Anthropology of the Middle East
- Human Rights and Non-Governmental Organizations
- Economic Anthropology
- Introduction to Anthropology (includes biological anthropology and archaeology)

Interdisciplinary and Non-major Courses – Regis University, Western Connecticut State University, and University of Arizona

- Environment and Culture
- Animal Rights and Justice

- Anime Fantasy of Hayao Miyazaki
- Honors Thesis Writing
- Feminist Theory
- Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies
- Business Writing
- Advanced Rhetoric and Communication
- First Year Writing Seminar and First Year Experience
- World Literature
- Landscape and Environmental Geography (co-taught with Dr. Simone Betti at the University of Macerata, Italy)

Publications

- Isik, Damla. (book manuscript in preparation). Living the "Good Life": Slow City, Food, and Municipal Development in Turkey.
- Isik, Damla. (under review). Developing the Peri-Urban: Slow City and Slow Food. In Isabella Davidova and Louis Fishman. (Eds.), *Turkey at 100*. Peter Lang Publishers.
- Isik, Damla. (2023). The Multiple Geographies of Violence and the Istanbul Convention: Intersectionality of Nationalism, Patriarchy, and Gender in Turkey. *Documenti Geografici*, 2, 89-118.
<https://www.documentigeografici.it/index.php/docugeo/issue/view/26/showToc>
- Isik, Damla. (2021). Teaching to Become Intersectional Allies: Engaged Activism, Ecofeminism, and Anarchism in Building Resistance in the Classroom. In Amber George. (Ed.), *Gender and Sexuality in Critical Animal Studies* (pp. 63-77). London: Lexington Books.
- Isik, Damla. (2020). Engineering Self and Civil Society: the Promise of Charity in Turkey. *Religion*, 51(1), 58-73.
- Isik, Damla. (2019). The Politics of Giving: Charity, State, Civil Society, and Governance in Contemporary Turkey. *Journal of Muslim Philanthropy and Civil Society*, 3(2), 1-25.
- Isik, Damla. (2018). 'Just Like Prophet Mohammad Preached': Labor, Piety, and Charity in Contemporary Turkey. In Ebru Kongar, Jennifer C. Olmsted, and Elora Shehabuddin. (Eds.), *Gender and Economics in Muslim Communities: Critical Feminist and Postcolonial Analyses* (pp. 212-235). New York: Routledge Press.
- Isik, Damla. (2015). Dilemmas of Women's Movements in Turkey: Labor, Charity, and Neoliberal Patriarchy. In Huma Ahmed-Ghosh. (Ed.), *Asian Muslim Women: Globalization and Local Realities* (pp. 39-59). New York: State University of New York Press.

- Isik, Damla. (2014). Vakif as Intent and Practice: Charity and Poor Relief in Turkey. [Special Issue on Politics of Benevolence]. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 46, 307-327.
- Isik, Damla. (2013). ‘Just Like Prophet Mohammad Preached’: Labor, Piety, and Charity in Contemporary Turkey. *Feminist Economics*, 20 (4), pp. 1-23.
- Isik, Damla, Houri Berberian, and Ali Igmen, (Eds.). (2012). State and Society Relations. [Special Issue]. *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East*, 32(1).
- Isik, Damla. (2012). The Specter and Reality of Corruption in State and Civil Society: Privatizing and Auditing Poor Relief in Turkey. *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and Middle East*, 32(1), 57-70.
- Isik, Damla. (2011). Neighborly Ties and Sohbet: Global Capitalism and the Work of Weaving in Konya, Turkey. In Walter E. Little, and Patricia A. McAnany, (Eds.), *Textile Economies: Power and Value from the Local to the Transnational* (pp. 163-181). Maryland: Alta Mira Press.
- Isik, Damla. (2010). Personal and Global Economies: Male Carpet Manufacturers as Entrepreneurs in the Weaving Neighborhoods of Konya, Turkey. *American Ethnologist*, 37 (1), 52-67.
- Isik, Damla (2010). Nimble Hands Weaving Culture: Representation and Sale of Turkish Carpets over the Internet. In Sue Abel, Anita Nowak, and Marjan De Bruin, (Eds.), *Women/Advertising/Representation: Extending Beyond Familiar Paradigms* (pp. 129-145). N.J.: Hampton Press.
- Isik, Damla. (2008). On Sabir and Agency: The Politics of Pious Practice in Konya’s Weaving Industry. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 10 (4), 518-541.

Invited Presentations, Lectures, Seminars, and Workshops

- 2025 American University in Bulgaria (AUBG), Blagoevgrad. Research Lecture.
- 2025 University of Veliko Turnovo, Veliko Tarnavo. Research Lecture.
- 2023 Inter-University Centre Dubrovnik, Dubrovnik, Divided Societies XXIV: Nationalism and Violence Accelerated PhD Course, Research Lecture.
- 2023 ISCSP: Instituto Superior De Ciencias Sociais E Politicas. Universidade De Lisboa, Portugal, Research workshop and lecture.
- 2022 Inter-University Centre Dubrovnik, Dubrovnik, Divided Societies XXIII: Myths and Media Accelerated PhD Course, Research Lecture.
- 2022 Regis University, Celebration of Faculty Scholarship and Creativity. Research seminar.
- 2022 Society of Applied Anthropology Annual Meeting. Roundtable Participation.
- 2019 Inter-University Centre Dubrovnik, Dubrovnik Divided Societies XXII: Migration, Borders, and the State Accelerated PhD Course, Research Lecture.

- 2018 University of Zagreb, Zagreb, Croatia, Lecture series titled “Middle East and the Challenges of Contemporary World, Research Lecture.
2019. University of Zadar, Zadar, Croatia, Research Lecture.
- 2018 Inter-University Centre Dubrovnik, Dubrovnik, Divided Societies XXI: Old and New Nationalisms Accelerated PhD Course, Research Lecture.
- 2018 University of Zadar, Croatia. Writing Seminar.
- 2018 University of Rijeka, Croatia. Research Seminar.
- 2017 Colorado Fulbright Annual Meeting, Luncheon Research Talk.
- 2016 University of Bayreuth, Germany, Religious Engineering: Alternative Practices in the Context of Global Development, Workshop Participation
- 2015 Annual Meeting of Middle Eastern Studies Association. Discussant.
- 2014 United Nations Population Fund, Research Seminar, Women’s Empowerment: Post 2015 Policies at the Intersection of Feminist Theology and Feminist Economics. New York.
- 2011 Yale University, Yale Summer Institute on Religion and Politics in the Middle East. Research Presentation.

Presentations

- Isik, D. 2024. *Imagining Sustainable Tourism and Development: Slow City and Rural Return Migration In Turkey*. Nineteenth International Conference on Interdisciplinary at Social Sciences. Krakow, Poland.
- Isik, D. 2022. *Developing the Peri-Urban*. Annual Meeting of Middle Eastern Studies Association, Denver, CO.
- Isik, D. 2019. *Peri-urban Imaginary as Resistance and Alternative: Slow City, Slow Food, and Women’s Entrepreneurship in Seferihisar, Turkey*. Annual Meeting of Middle Eastern Studies Association, New Orleans, LA.
- Isik, D. 2018. *The Politics and Poetics of Giving in Contemporary Turkey*. Symposium on Muslim Philanthropy and Civil Society. Lilly Family School of Philanthropy. Indiana University, Indiana.
- Isik, D. 2018. *Dilemmas of Women’s Movements and Rights in Turkey: Neoliberal Patriarchy, Family, and the Nation*. University of Zadar, Croatia.
- Isik, D. 2016. *The Intent to Give and Receive: Charitable Islam, Compassion, and the Concept of Hak in Contemporary Turkey*. LUCSoR Annual Conference: Compassion, Social Engagement and Discontent: Believing and the Politics of Belonging in Europe Today. Leiden University, Leiden, The Netherlands.

- Isik, D. 2014. *Vakif as Intent and Practice: Charity and Poor Relief in Contemporary Turkey*. Post-Islamism in Turkey 1: Theoretical Approach. World Congress of Middle Eastern Studies (WOCMES), Ankara, Turkey.
- Isik, D. 2012. *'Just Like Prophet Muhammad Preached': Labor, Piety, and Charity in Contemporary Turkey*, Gender and Economics in Muslim Communities (GEMC) Workshop, Barcelona, Spain.
- Isik, D. 2011. *Charitable Futures and Charitable Pasts: Entrepreneurship, Charity and Poverty in Contemporary Turkey*, Annual Meeting of Middle Eastern Studies Association, Washington DC.
- Isik, D. 2011 *Beyond Mavi Marmara: Volunteerism, Aid Relief, and Pious Economies in Turkey*, Annual Meeting of American Anthropological Association, Montreal, Canada.
- Isik, D. 2011. *Refashioning Communities of Belonging: Remembering Ottoman Charity and Generosity in Contemporary Poor Relief in Turkey*, Annual Meeting of Middle East Studies Association, San Diego, CA.
- Isik, D. 2009. *Governing Transparency and Corruption at a Non-Governmental Organization: The Case of Deniz Feneri Aid and Solidarity Association in Turkey*, Annual Meeting of American Anthropological Association, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- Isik, D. 2009. *Nostalgia for the Ottoman Vakif: State-Civil Society Relations in Turkey*, Second Annual California State University MEIS Conference/Workshop, San Francisco, California.
- Isik, D. 2008. *The Headscarf Conundrum of Democracy and Laicism: Modernity, Representation and Gender in Turkish Politics*, Annual Meeting of American Anthropological Association, San Francisco, California.
- Isik, D. 2015. *Self and Community in the Neoliberal Age: Paths of Economic Globalization*. Social Sciences Conference: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Contemporary Social Change, Split, Croatia.
- Isik, D. 2012. *Secret Places: Industrialization, Informal Labor, and Gender in Central Anatolia*. Annual Meeting of the Society for Economic Anthropology, San Antonio, Texas.
- Isik, D. 2010. *Stones versus Computers: Privatization of Aid Relief, the Concept of Haqq (Hak) and Charitable Islam in Contemporary Turkey*. The Turks and Islam International Conference, Indiana University, Indiana.
- Isik, D. 2010. *Refashioning a 'Just' Turkish Republic: Remembering Ottoman Charity and Generosity in Contemporary Poor Relief*. World Congress for Middle Eastern Studies, Barcelona, Spain.
- Isik, D. 2009. *Weaving Carpets, Attending Sohbet; Neighborly Ties and Global Capitalism in Konya, Turkey*. Society for Economic Anthropology Annual Meeting. Cotsen Institute of Archaeology, University of California, Los Angeles, California.

- Isik, D. 2008. *The Fantasies and Ghosts of Globalization: Successful Entrepreneurs and Communal Ties in the Global Economy*. Netherlands Association of Gender and Feminist Anthropology Conference, Amsterdam, Netherlands.
- Isik, D. 2008. *Secrets of Globalized Labor Relations and Habituation of Pious, Industrious Behavior: The Ethics of Doing Work in Konya's Carpet Weaving Industry*. Society for Cultural Anthropology Biennial Meeting, Los Angeles, California.
- Isik, D. 2008. *Labor Rights and Women's Rights: Gender Inequality, Economic Realities, and Labor Politics in Turkey*. Economic Justice Summit sponsored by National Organization for Women (NOW Foundation), Atlanta, Georgia.
- Isik, D. 2007. *On Sabir and Agency: The Politics of Pious Practice in Konya's Weaving Industry*. UMass Boston Fall Institute on Engaging Islam: Feminisms, Religiosities, and Self-Determinations, Boston, MA.
- Isik, D. 2006. *Politics of Feminism in Turkey: At the Interstices of Islam and Secularism*. Green Valley Women's Conference, Tucson, AZ.
- Isik, D. 2005. *Gendering Globalization: The Changing Conditions of Women Weavers and the Weaving Industry in Turkey*. Middle East Studies Association Conference, Washington, Washington DC.
- Isik, D. 2005. *Weaving Culture, Doing Work: Fashion, Authenticity, and Women Weavers in Modern Turkey*. American Anthropological Association Conference, Washington, Washington DC.
- Isik, D. 2004. *Bird's Eye View: Miniaturization of the Monumental as Heritage Work – the Case of Miniaturk*. Middle East Studies Regional Conference, Santa Barbara, California.
- Isik, D. 2003. *Creation of Heritage in Catalhoyuk, Turkey*. Middle East Studies Regional Conference, Santa Barbara, California.

Peer Reviews Solicited by Journals

Economic Anthropology

Journal of Muslim Philanthropy and Civil Society

Journal of Middle East Women's Studies

Open Journal of Social Sciences

Social Politics

International Journal of Middle East Studies

Social Problems

Current Anthropology

Feminist Anthropology

Professional Affiliations

Fulbright Alumni

American Anthropological Association

Society for Cultural Anthropology

Society for Economic Anthropology

Society for the Anthropology of Work

Association for Feminist Anthropology

Middle East Studies Association

Advising

On a yearly basis, I have been the main advisor for approximately 20-30 undergraduate students from the Department as well as from First Year Experience program since I started working at Regis University in 2011-2012 academic year. As an advisor, it was my duty to plan out the academic programs for these students, and to assist them in vocational discernment.