



Meet Geoffrey Macdonald, a PhD candidate who loves sporting his “Colorado Pride” t-shirt—especially on the East Coast.

Tell us a bit about yourself: I am from Long Island, New York. I completed my B.A. degree in International Relations at Boston University, and my M.A. in [International Security](#) here at the [Josef Korbel School of International Studies](#).

What brought you to the Josef Korbel School? I had an internship working on conflict resolution in Bethlehem and writing for a political journal in East Jerusalem for seven months, and when that was over, I decided to stay in school and pursue [my PhD](#). I am now done with classes and the comprehensive exam—which was intense, but went well—and am nearly done with my dissertation prospectus.

What is the subject of your dissertation? I transitioned from Security studies to Comparative Politics, and am looking at governance in divided societies, particularly India, Indonesia and South Africa. I am interested in multi-ethnic political parties, such as the African National Congress (ANC), the Congress Party and Sekber Golkar; how do they form and how do they succeed? I plan on doing some field research, but for now working with the backdrop of the mountains is really nice.

Are you teaching classes as well? I am currently a teacher’s assistant (TA) for Introduction to Comparative Politics and for Introduction to International Politics. Teaching is fun, yet challenging; no one teaches you how to teach, they just make you an expert in something. I have come to enjoy it, but it’s terrifying at the beginning; I would like to be a professor in the future though.

What else have you been involved with on-campus? I am on the editorial board of the [Josef Korbel Journal of Advanced International Studies](#). We work with PhD students from other schools and will be publishing our third edition this spring.

What’s your dream class to teach? I would like to go back to teaching about the [Middle East](#); there is a lot of misinformation and misunderstandings about the region that I got from living there. I think correcting those misconceptions would be valuable to students.

- - Nirvana Bhatia, Master's candidate in International Human Rights
Josef Korbel School of International Studies