Summer 2015, June 8 – July 31 (8 weeks)  
T410: The String Quartets of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven  
Prof. Roman Ivanovitch  
M/W/F, 3.00-4.30 pm (M267)

Ever since they were composed, the string quartets of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven have been viewed as touchstones of musical sophistication—some of the most profound, challenging music ever written, yet models also of wit, grace, humor, and collaborative music-making. As such, not only are they an incomparably rich source of musical experience, they are foundational to the understanding and interrogation of our own inherited musical values.

At the heart of this class will be an analytical survey of the genre over a nearly sixty-year span, from Haydn’s quartets of the 1770s to Beethoven’s monumental late quartets of the 1820s. We will develop a sense of appropriate analytical modes of engagement for this music—not simply the traditional methodologies of tonal-formal-motivic analysis, vital as these are, but also some newer perspectives, which encompass ideas of sociability, performativity, agency, virtuosity, and (crucially for an intimate genre which grew increasingly more public) theatricality. What these more recent, complementary approaches share is a direct concern for how we might connect musical performance in its widest sense—what it is like to play music, hear it, see it—to analysis.

Sessions will involve the analysis of scores, as well as reading from analytical or historical literature. The final project for the class will be an analytical essay.