The Blues is a uniquely American musical genre. The history of the Blues echoes the African-American experience, from the Delta to the industrialized north, from Mississippi to Chicago, Memphis, and beyond. This course will combine cultural history with music appreciation to explore the history of the Blues, looking at such figures as Son House, Robert Johnson, Bessie Smith, Muddy Waters, and B.B. King. We will learn about the historical context that gave birth to the Blues as well as learn about the musical structure of the blues, touching on chord progressions, bass lines and rhythms. Finally, we will examine the impact of the Blues on other genres, such as rock, R&B, jazz and hip-hop.