

# Next Generation Leaders: BTS

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Faculty Sponsor: Edwin Lin

Class Days/Hours: 2 hours a week, Monday 7-9 PM PST

Class Location: In Person, 103 Genetic Plant and Biology Building

Unit Information: Sociology 198, 2 unit

## Course Description:

This course will focus on Korean boy group, BTS, **analyzing** their influence through an academic lens. Some of the content we will cover includes the artists' history, image, and philanthropy. The class attempts to **define** their impact by discussing globalization and media portrayals. Students will be able to reflect on their own perspectives regarding the intersection of culture, language, and identity by **observing** BTS' rise to fame in both the Eastern and Western hemispheres.

## Learning Objectives:

- Learn about the world's biggest music group
- Examine possible reasons for their success
- Analyze BTS's career from history to present
- Think critically about the impact of music in a globalized world
- Study intersectionality through BTS' identity and career

## Course Structure:

In-class sessions will consist of lectures, screenings, and group discussions and assignments. Lectures will focus on introducing material, while the screenings will supplement the material. We will then open the floor for group discussions which will focus on attempting to answer questions we have prepared for each class session. Additionally, the readings due each week will aid in preparation for the following class.

Out-of-class assignments will consist of weekly reflections that consist of posting three insights about the previous class and readings, and then responding to three other classmates along with a creative assignment. The insights are due every Sunday by 11:59 PM and responses to other classmates will be due every Monday at 6:59 PM. Mini assignments specific to the class will also be assigned as well, due on Mondays at 6:59 PM. The final is an open-ended project that will provide students a chance to showcase and incorporate what they have learned. The format can be anything from a paper to a presentation to artwork, as long as it has been approved by the facilitators beforehand.

### Attendance and Participation:

Attendance is **highly crucial** as it is where most of the learning, discussions, and homework assignments will be applied. Three unexcused absences will result in a NP, and more than five total absences (excused or unexcused) may result in a NP. Absences will only be excused with the completion of the **makeup assignment** within one week AND you will have to email us by **4 PM** the day of class to notify us of your reason for absence. Of course, we too are students and understand when things come up, so let us know if any extenuating circumstances appear that would prevent your attendance or participation.

All students are required to actively participate in the discussion and expected to have read the assigned material prior to the class meetings. We will give you full credit for participation as long as we see you actively take part in small and/or large group discussions and engage with the class content. Points will be taken off if we see you consistently distracted with other work, sleeping, etc. If you are concerned about your participation grade, come talk to us.

### Course Requirements:

#### Prerequisites:

There are no prerequisites for this course. Everyone is welcome to take this DeCal.

#### Textbooks/Required materials:

There is no required textbook. Supplemental readings will be emailed to students.

## Grades are based upon the following:

Attendance (20%)

Participation (20%)

Weekly Assignments (25%)

Final Project (35%)

## Class policies:

- Failure to submit 5 assignments or weekly discussion posts will result in a NP.
- Failure to submit the final project will result in a NP.
- 3 unexcused absences will result in a NP.
- More than 5 total absences (excused or unexcused) may result in a NP.
  - Absences will only be excused with the completion of the makeup assignment AND you will have to email us by 4 PM the day of class to notify us of your reason for absence.
- Late homework will be accepted up until the following week.
- All work must be your own. Any instance of plagiarism will result in a NP.

## Weekly Calendar (subject to change):

<b>Week</b>	<b>Topics &amp; Agenda</b>	<b>Assignments Due</b>
Lecture 1	Class Introduction (Info Session)	DeCal Applications!
Lecture 2 (9/11)	Introduction & Artistry Part I (Debut – HYYH)	N/A
Lecture 3 (9/18)	Artistry Part II (Wings – Proof)	Discussion post on Introduction & Artistry Part I  Creative Assignment on Introduction & Artistry Part I
Lecture 4	Artistry Part III (Solo Works)	Discussion post on Artistry Part II

(9/25)		Creative Assignment on Artistry Part II
Lecture 5 (10/2)	Social Impact & HYYH	Discussion post on Artistry Part III  Creative Assignment on Artistry Part III
Lecture 6 (10/9)	Social Impact Part II	Discussion post on Social Impact & HYYH  Creative Assignment on Social Impact & HYYH
Lecture 7 (10/16)	Image & Masculinity	Discussion post on Social Impact Part II  Creative Assignment on Social Impact Part II
Lecture 8 (10/23)	Globalization	Discussion post of Image & Masculinity  Creative Assignment on Image & Masculinity
Lecture 9 (10/30)	Media & Social Media	Discussion post on Globalization  Creative Assignment on Globalization
Lecture 10 (11/6)	Fandom	Discussion post on Media & Social Media  Creative Assignment on Media & Social Media
Lecture 11 (11/13)	Success and Struggles in America	Discussion post on Fandom  Creative Assignment on Fandom  Work on Final Project

Lecture 12 (11/27)	Presentations	Discussion post on Success and Struggles in America  Creative Assignment on Success and Struggles in America  <b>Final Project due!</b>
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### Readings (subject to change):

**Readings will supplement discussion and should be read before each class. All readings (unless it is a video) will be uploaded as pdfs on bCourses. The readings listed below may change—any changes will be announced via bCourses.**

### Week 1: Class Introduction (Info Sessions)

### Week 2: Introduction and Artistry I (2 Cool 4 Skool ~ HYYH)

Bruner, R. (2018, October 10). *How BTS is taking over the world*. TIME Magazine.  
<https://time.com/collection/next-generation-leaders/5414052/bts-next-generation-leaders/>.

### Week 3: Artistry II (Wings ~ Proof)

Aronofsky, D. [SearchlightPictures]. (2010, August 2017). *Black Swan | Official Trailer* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ja11XOB-bs>.

(We would like to add a trigger warning for y'all about the Black Swan trailer. The movie is a thriller/drama and the trailer contains some of the explicit content such as mentions of suicide, sexual content, body deformation (wings coming out of her body, rashes), violence, etc. The pacing may also be unnerving as it is meant to mimic the erratic state of Nina's mind during the movie. Please reach out to us if you feel uncomfortable. We do not want any of you to feel uneasy or anxious if you do have an adverse reaction to the trailer.)

BANGTANTV. (2020, December 5). *BTS (방탄소년단) Black Swan Perf. + ON + Life Goes On + Dynamite @ 2020 MMA* [Video]. YouTube.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PtaP4UkZKyc>.

**(Only the Black Swan performance is required—watch until the 2:58 mark.)**

- Delgado, S. (2020, January 17). *BTS releases powerful “Black Swan” song and art film as first MOTS: 7 single*. Teen Vogue.  
<https://www.teenvogue.com/story/bts-black-swan-song-art-film-first-mots-7-single>
- Liu, J. (2020, November 23). *BTS’ new album “BE” addresses mental health during COVID-19*. Pipe Dream.  
<https://www.bupipedream.com/ac/119326/auto-draft-663/>.
- Hybe Labels. (2020, March 4). *BTS (방탄소년단) 'Black Swan' Official MV* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0lapF4DQPKQ>.
- Yoon, M. (2018, October 12). *BTS fever ‘revolutionizing’ existing structure*. The Korea Herald.  
[https://kpoherald.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=201810121112354317993\\_2](https://kpoherald.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=201810121112354317993_2).

#### Week 4: Artistry III: Solo Works - (Jack in the Box ~ Present)

We will assign each person a specific member in class the week before. Pick two songs from the solo works of the member that you were assigned, according to the restrictions below. Listen to the two songs, read the translated lyrics using [doolsetbangtan](http://doolsetbangtan.com), and reflect on the song and its message.

**Jin:** 1) “Astronaut” and 2) either “Abyss” or “Tonight”

**Suga:** 1) One song from *D-Day* and 2) one song from either *Agust D* or *D-2*.

**J-Hope:** 1) One song from *Hope World* and 2) one song from *Jack in the Box*.

**RM:** 1) One song from *Indigo* and 2) one song from either *Mono* or *RM*.

**Jimin:** 1) “Promise” and 2) one song from *Face*.

**V:** 1) “Scenery” or “Winter Bear” and 2) one song from *Layover*.

**Jungkook:** 1) “Seven” and 2) either “Still With You” or “My You”

#### Week 5: Social Impact I - HYYH, Philanthropy, Personal Impact

Hybe Labels. (2015, May 10). *BTS (방탄소년단) 'I NEED U' Official MV (Original ver.)* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jjskoRh8GTE>.

Hybe Labels. (2017, August 18). *BTS (방탄소년단) LOVE YOURSELF Highlight Reel '起承轉結'* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EHdK5U2hf4o>.

Kim, J.. (2018, May 29). *How BTS are breaking K-Pop’s biggest taboos*. Rolling Stone.

<https://www.rollingstone.com/music/music-news/how-bts-are-breaking-k-pops-biggest-taboos-628141/>.

Nissen, A. (2018, June 5). *How South Korean boy band BTS became a K-pop hit by fighting for social rights*. The Conversation.

<https://theconversation.com/how-south-korean-boy-band-bts-became-a-k-pop-hit-by-fighting-for-social-rights-97562>.

The below two are just for those that are curious and want to explore the vastly complicated BTS Universe more.

**Optional.** *A Guide to BU Content*. <http://bucontentgui.de/#about-timeline>

**Optional.** Lico & BigHit Ent. (2019). *SAVE ME*. Webtoon.

[https://www.webtoons.com/en/drama/bts-save-me/list?title\\_no=1514&page=1](https://www.webtoons.com/en/drama/bts-save-me/list?title_no=1514&page=1)

## Week 6: Social Impact II - Misogyny, Cultural Appropriation

Dahir, S. *Naegaz in Paris: How Black Culture Created K-Pop*. The B-Side.

<https://berkeleybside.com/blackcultureandkpop/>.

Hybe Labels. (2014, October 21). *BTS (방탄소년단) '호르몬전쟁' Official MV* [Video].

YouTube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hhph0\\_CdUHg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hhph0_CdUHg).

Tucci, S. (2016, April 2). *When K-pop culturally appropriates*. Daily Dot.

<https://www.dailydot.com/upstream/kpop-hip-hop-culture-appropriation/>.

호르몬 전쟁 (*War of Hormone*). (2019, January 2019). Doolset lyrics.

<https://doolsetbangtan.wordpress.com/2019/01/19/war-of-hormone/>.

## Week 7: Image & Masculinity

BTS Breaking Beauty Standards “*Breaking the Mold: Bts and Korean Beauty*

*Standards*,” <https://juliannesanjose.com/breaking-the-mold-bts-and-korean-beauty-standards/>

BANGTANTV. (2023, March 23) “[*CHOREOGRAPHY*] 지민 (*Jimin*) 'Like Crazy'

*Dance Practice*”. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uatW2Phormk>

DeNinno, N. (2012, September 18). *The Korean men makeup fad: South Korea is largest market for men's skincare in the world*. International Business Times.

<https://www.ibtimes.com/korean-men-makeup-fad-south-korea-largest-market-mens-skincare-world-790100>.

Wilson, T.M. (2018). *How BTS's androgynous, fluid style is empowering teens worldwide*. Dazed.  
<https://www.dazeddigital.com/music/article/42565/1/bts-gender-fluidity-teen-angst-column>.

**Optional.** *Flowerboys and the appeal of 'soft masculinity' in South Korea*. (2018, September 5). BBC News. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-42499809>.

## Week 8: Globalization

Jin, D. Y., & Ryoo, W. (2014). Critical interpretation of hybrid K-pop: The global-local paradigm of English mixing in lyrics. *Popular Music and Society*, 37(2), 113-131.

Stack, L. (2018, January 1). *Korean War, a 'forgotten' conflict that shaped the modern world*. New York Times.  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/01/world/asia/korean-war-history.html>.

TIME. (2018, October 11). *K-Pop's BTS On Why They're Unique, Their Parents' Generation & More | Next Generation Leaders | TIME* [Video]. YouTube.  
[youtube.com/watch?v=6QK-HR7xfEA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6QK-HR7xfEA).

**Optional.** Finn, D. (2021, February 26) *How Korea Became a Forgotten War: An Interview with Owen Miller*. Jacobin Magazine.  
<https://jacobin.com/2021/02/korea-forgotten-war-owen-miller-north-south>.

**Optional.** Keith, S. (2021). BTS as cultural ambassadors: K-pop and Korea in Western media. In *The Soft Power of the Korean Wave* (pp. 155-167). Routledge.

## Week 9: Media & Social Media

Doan, K. (2018, February 4). *Western media coverage of BTS: Is it fine or could it be better?* Seoulbeats.  
<https://seoulbeats.com/2018/02/western-media-coverage-on-bts-is-it-fine-or-could-it-be-better/>.

**Pre-read for activity.** “Bangtan Boys MV "No More Dream" Lacks Reality”:  
<https://seoulbeats.com/2013/06/bangtan-boys-mv-no-more-dream-lacks-reality/>

**Pre-read for activity.** Abramovitch, Seth. “BTS Is Back: Music’s Billion-Dollar Boy Band Takes the next Step.” *The Hollywood Reporter*, The Hollywood Reporter, 29 Apr. 2023,



[www.hollywoodreporter.com/movies/movie-features/bts-is-back-musics-billion-dollar-boy-band-takes-next-step-1244580/](http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/movies/movie-features/bts-is-back-musics-billion-dollar-boy-band-takes-next-step-1244580/)

**Optional.** *BTS marketing success: The Kpop kings of social media.* (2021, August 21).

Annelle Digital.

<https://www.annelledigital.com/blog/bts-marketing-success-the-kpop-kings-social-media/>.

**Optional.** Verboord, Marc & van Noord, Sharon. (2016). “The online place of popular music: Exploring the impact of geography and social media on pop artists’ mainstream media attention,” Abstract & Introduction. *Popular Communication: The International Journal of Media and Culture*.

## Week 10: Fandom

Momenian, D. (2019, February 21). ‘Crazy, teenage girls’: Female fandom marginalized in today’s society. Collegiate Times.

[http://www.collegiatetimes.com/opinion/crazy-teenage-girls-female-fandom-marginalized-in-today-s-society/article\\_a6e9d60a-3541-11e9-b329-e3d3721816f6.html](http://www.collegiatetimes.com/opinion/crazy-teenage-girls-female-fandom-marginalized-in-today-s-society/article_a6e9d60a-3541-11e9-b329-e3d3721816f6.html).

Moon, Kat (2020, November 20). “Inside the BTS ARMY, the Devoted Fandom With an Unrivaled Level of Organization.” Time. <https://time.com/5912998/bts-army/>

Moon, Kat (2022, February 22) . “These Portraits Show That the BTS ARMY Is Not a Monolith.” Time. <https://time.com/6122609/bts-army-photos/>

## Week 11: Success and Struggles in America

Byrne, B.P. & Gopaldas A. (2020, April 3). *Radio, Why Won't You Play BTS?*. Now This News. <https://nowthisnews.com/pop/radio-why-wont-you-play-bts>.

Romano, A. (2020, November 4). *With “Dynamite,” BTS beat the US music industry at its own cheap game.* Vox. <https://www.vox.com/21498770/bts-dynamite>.

Tinoco, F. (2023, April 13). *Is Billboard purposely sabotaging BTS? BTS’ Billboard Hot 100 controversy, explained.* We Got This Covered.

<https://wegotthiscovered.com/music/is-billboard-purposefully-sabotaging-bts-bts-billboard-hot-100-controversy-explained/>.

## Week 12 : Final Project Presentations