

# 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, Dwinelle 219

Unit Information: Sociology 198, 1 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. 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. The insights are due every Sunday by 11:59 PM and responses to other classmates will be due every Monday 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.

## 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 and Participation (40%)\*

Weekly Assignments (25%)

Final Project (35%)

\*Attendance is **highly crucial** as it is where most of the learning, discussions, and homework assignments will be applied. Participation depends on engagement in class and completing the readings.

### Class policies:

- Failure to submit 3 homework assignments will result in a NP.
- Failure to submit the final project will result in a NP.
- 3 unexcused absences will result in a NP.
- Late homework will be accepted up until the following week.
- All work must be your own. Any instance of plagiarization 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 (1/30)	Introduction & Artistry Part I (Debut – Dark & Wild)	N/A
Lecture 3 (2/6)	Artistry Part II (HYYH – MOTS)	Discussion post on Introduction & Artistry Part I
Lecture 4 (2/13)	Artistry Part III (Dynamite – Present)	Discussion post on Artistry Part II
Lecture 5 (2/27)	Social Impact & HYYH	Discussion post on Artistry Part III
Lecture 6 (3/6)	Social Impact Part II	Discussion post on Social Impact & HYYH
Lecture 7 (3/13)	Image & Masculinity	Discussion post on Social Impact Part II
Lecture 8 (3/20)	Globalization	Discussion post of Image & Masculinity
Lecture 9 (4/3)	Media & Social Media	Discussion post on Globalization
Lecture 10 (4/10)	Fandom	Discussion post on Media & Social Media
Lecture 11 (4/17)	Success and Struggles in America	Discussion post on Fandom Work on Final Project
Lecture 12 (4/24)	Presentations	Final Project

## 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) ~ Dark & Wild)

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 (HYYH ~ Love Yourself)

Glasby, T. (2017, October 25). *Meet BTS, the K-Pop phenomenon breaking world records*. Dazed.

<https://www.dazeddigital.com/music/article/37863/1/bts-k-pop-interview>.

Jo, Y. (2021, February 15). *A Korean culture and art researcher breaks down BTS's dances*. Weverse magazine.

<https://magazine.weverse.io/article/view?ref=artist&lang=en&artist=1&num=107>.

Yoon, M. (2018, October 12). *BTS fever 'revolutionizing' existing structure*. The Korea Herald.

[https://kpopherald.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=201810121112354317993\\_2](https://kpopherald.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=201810121112354317993_2).

### Week 4: Artistry III - (Map of the Soul: Persona ~ Present)

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>.

## Week 5: Social Impact I - HYYPH, 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

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/>.

Haynes, G. (2017, May 23). *Why BTS are the K-pop kings of social media*. The Guardian.  
<https://www.theguardian.com/music/shortcuts/2017/may/23/bts-k-pop-kings-social-media>.

**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

Carville, O. (2020, October 28). *No One Fights QAnon Like the Global Army of K-Pop Superfans*. Bloomberg.  
<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2020-10-28/bts-k-pop-stans-are-fighting-qanon-and-maga-on-social-media>.

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).

Rolli, B. (2020, June 8). *BTS ARMY matched the group's \$1 million Black Lives Matter donation, proving the positive power of fandoms*. Forbes.  
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/bryanrolli/2020/06/08/bts-army-black-lives-matter-1-million-donation/?sh=16d1aa726465>.

Seo, Y. & Hollingsworth J. (2019, October 20). *BTS' army of admirers: Inside one of the world's most powerful fandoms*. CNN.  
<https://www.cnn.com/2019/10/12/asia/bts-fandom-army-intl-hnk/index.html>.

## Week 11: Success and Struggles in America

Lee, Y. (2021, July 12). *What BTS achieved in the US*. Weverse magazine.  
<https://magazine.weverse.io/article/view?ref=artist&lang=en&artist=1&num=203>.

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>.

Suh, R. (2022, July 20). *What BTS's visit to the White House means to me as an overseas Korean and a marginal person*. Weverse magazine.  
<https://magazine.weverse.io/article/view?ref=artist&lang=en&artist=1&num=477>.

**Optional.** 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>.

## Week 12 : Final Project Presentations