

ENGLIT1760-2 TOPICS IN POPULAR CULTURE: K-POP

Fall 2021

Instructor: Dr. Areum Jeong

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Lecture: Tue 6:30 pm-9 pm / Zone 3, Room 101

Office Hours: Mon/Tue 10 am-12pm / Zone 3, Room 320 B

Course Description

This course explores representations of Korean culture and society with special attention to the Korean Wave, the cultural phenomenon known as *hallyu*. The course focuses on how K-pop circulates, negotiates, and translates Korean culture as these products participate in the transnational culture market and attract global audience and fandom. The course examines the meanings of various politics and how Korean popular culture alters, enhances, or intervenes in politics. The course looks at how K-pop is not a fixed and unchanging entity, but rather a set of representations that are constantly adapting and shifting to reflect economic and political conditions.

No Korean language ability is required; no background knowledge in Korean culture or history is assumed; all course materials are subtitled in English.

Course Objectives

- Students will identify major material conditions and social contexts that generated the Korean cultural industry as conscious consumer-scholars that reflect on and account for its globalization.
- Students will understand the role of diverse media platforms in the rapidly changing landscape of cultural production and consumption.
- Students will understand performing bodies not as end products, but as a way of epistemology or knowing.
- Students will rehearse the presentation of their own research through oral presentation.
- Students will develop skills in formal analysis and improve critical writing with an emphasis on developing thesis-driven arguments.

Course Assessment

Attendance and Participation 10%

Weekly Blackboard Forum Posts 20% (5 posts, 4 points each)

Group Presentation 20%

Final Project Proposal 5%

Final Project Presentation 5%

Final Project 40%

Course Assignments and Requirements

Attendance and Participation

Attendance and active participation are mandatory for all students. Students are expected to arrive to lecture on time and remain until class is dismissed. Students are expected to come to lecture prepared, with assigned readings and any additional assignments completed. All readings

will be available as PDFs and uploaded on the course webpage. Students are highly encouraged to print out the readings, make notes, and bring both the readings and notes to lecture.

Electronic devices—cell phones, e-readers, laptops, pagers, tablets, etc.—must be turned off during class except with special permission from the instructor. Classroom courtesy includes the full participation of every student. If you must leave the room during class, do so quietly and unobtrusively. Disruptive eating, sleeping, and unnecessary talking will not be permitted. Anyone found to be in violation of this policy will be asked to leave the classroom immediately.

Attendance is taken at each lecture. Note: you may miss two lectures with no grade penalty. After two free absences, each unexcused absence will bear a penalty of a third of a letter grade. Five and more absences will result in a failing grade. It is the student's responsibility to make sure the instructor is able to note their attendance. In the case of absences, only documented medical emergencies and death of immediate family will be accepted.

Weekly Blackboard Forum Posts

Write a short (250-300 words) response to the week's reading and viewing assignment on Blackboard by **9 pm, the day before class**. Each week's prompt/question will be posted on Blackboard as a new discussion forum, and you will be required to write and post your answer as a thread. There will be no extra credit or make-up assignments.

Group Presentation

Present key issues in the assigned course texts and prepare 2-3 questions to lead the discussion. An ideal presentation ties case studies into the course texts, provides visual resources (images, video, etc.), and opens up deeper questions to the entire class to think together on. In addition, your group must submit a short summary (3 pages max, double-spaced, size 12, Times New Roman) that summarizes the presentation's key points.

Final Project Proposal

You must submit your project topic by Week 13. You are free to explore a topic of your choice, but all topics (and topic changes) must be approved by the instructor.

Final Project

Submit an individual creative work in any medium expressing your own understanding of K-pop examined in the course. Write a 3-5 page statement explaining your project. Previous examples of students' projects include a hand-drawn album cover, an alternative choreography or music video, a board/computer game featuring an idol competition program, a marketing plan for an idol's upcoming album, a K-pop inspired restaurant menu, a video essay explaining possible theories of worldviews, etc.

Course Website

Assignment guidelines, lecture slides, supplemental handouts and information, and the syllabus will be posted to the course website and/or emailed to students. You will receive notifications when these resources are available, but it is your responsibility to check the course website on a regular basis.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy

Students are expected to do their own work; this holds, in particular, for the assignments you have for the course. All assignments are expected to reflect the student's careful research, original thinking, and writing. Plagiarism—the presentation or submission of work, in any form, that is not a student's own, without acknowledgment of the sources—is a serious offense and can result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or dismissal. If you obtain ideas or information from an outside source, that source must be acknowledged. Citations must be provided for the content, ideas, or other materials that originate from other authors. Cheating will not be tolerated and those who do will receive a failing grade on the assignment or for the entire course.

Note: The instructor reserves the right to make reasonable changes to the assignments and schedule when deemed necessary and will offer advance notice.

Course Schedule

Week 1 (8/31) Introduction to the Course

Week 2 (9/7) What is K-pop?

SECTION I: THE HISTORY OF K-POP

Week 3 (9/14) The First Generation

Week 4 (9/21) NO CLASS

Week 5 (9/28) The Second Generation

Week 6 (10/5) NO CLASS

Week 7 (10/12) The Third Generation

Week 8 (10/19) The Fourth Generation

SECTION II: MAJOR TOPICS AND THEMES

Week 9 (10/26) Social Media and Storytelling

Week 10 (11/2) Gender and K-beauty

Week 11 (11/9) Race

Week 12 (11/16) Mental Health

SECTION III: THE MAKING OF K-POP

Week 13 (TBA) Songwriting and Choreography – Final Project Proposal Due

Week 14 (TBA) Music Video

Week 15 (12/7) and 16 (12/14) Final Project Presentations and Final Project Due