MUSI 3104 Introduction to K-Pop: History, Culture, and Industry
Spring 2026
Friday 4-5 pm in Braithwaite Recital Hall
Office Hour: M. 10-11am, W.&F. 9-10am

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Course Description

This course provides an in-depth exploration of K-pop (Korean pop music) as a global phenomenon. We will examine its history, cultural significance, musical and performance elements, industry structure, and its role in the global entertainment market. Students will learn K-pop songs and iconic dances from the four different generations of K-pop music. This course is linked to the study abroad program in South Korea in May.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students will:

- Understand the historical evolution of K-pop and its roots in Korean and Western music.
- Analyze the cultural and social aspects of K-pop, including fandom culture and identity.
- Examine the music production, performance, and business models within the K-pop industry.
- Discuss the role of social media, globalization, and technology in K-pop's expansion.
- Critically engage with K-pop's impact on gender representation, beauty standards, and cultural appropriation.

Course Materials

- Required Readings:

  o BTS: Blood, Sweat & Tears by Tamar Herman (https://www.amazon.com/BTS-Blood-Sweat-Tamar-Herman/dp/1974717135)
  o The Cambridge Companion to K-Pop (https://www.amazon.com/Cambridge-Companion-K-Pop-Companions-Music/dp/110894003X/ref=pd_lpo_d_sccl_1/144-8577744-9856365?pd_rd_w=z9XIg&content-id=amzn1.sym.4c8c52db-06f8-4e42-8e56-912796f2ea6c&pf_rd_p=4c8c52db-06f8-4e42-8e56-912796f2ea6c&pf_rd_r=H1EADSDKYQV8PMFAM653&pd_rd_wg=qotG1&pd_rd_r=5f7b9e5f-0842-4c63-8f91-f8bd7a7c386d&pd_rd_i=110894003X&psc=1)

- Media Resources: Selected K-pop music videos, documentaries, and interviews.

- Recommended Texts:

  o "Idol Trainees' Sweat and Tears: The Dark Side of K-pop" by various authors.

- o "K-pop: Popular Music, Cultural Amnesia, and Economic Innovation in South Korea" by John Lie.

- o "The Korean Wave: Korean Media Go Global" by Youna Kim.

- o K-pop Live: Fans, Idols and Multimedia Performance by Suk-Young Kim

Assignments and Grading

- Attendance (30%)
- Midterm (20%)
- Final Exam (20%)
- Final Project/Presentation (30%)

Course Outline

Week 1 (Jan 12, 2026): Introduction to K-pop and Course Overview

- What is K-pop? Definition and key characteristics

- Course expectations and assignments

Week 2 (Jan 26, 2026): Historical Background of K-pop

- Early influences: Traditional Korean music, trot, and Western pop

  - o **Traditional Korean Music:** Gagok, pansori, and folk music's influence on modern Korean sounds

  - o **Trot:** Notable artists include Nam Jin – "Seoul Night" and Kim Yonja – "Amor Fati"

  - o **Western Pop Influence:** The introduction of rock and disco in Korea (Shin Joong Hyun – "Beautiful Woman", Kim Wan-sun – "Pierrot Smiles at Us")

- The rise of K-pop in the 1990s (Seo Taiji and Boys – "I Know", SM Entertainment's early acts like H.O.T. – "Candy")

Week 3 (Feb 2, 2026): The K-pop Industry Structure

- Entertainment companies (Big 4: SM, JYP, YG, HYBE)

- Idol training system and debut process

Week 4 (Feb 9, 2026):* Music and Performance Elements

- Song structure and genre fusion

- Choreography, stage presence, and aesthetics

- The role of idols in shaping beauty standards

- Collaborations between K-pop and global fashion brands

Week 5 (Feb 16, 2026):* The Role of Fandoms and Social Media

- K-pop fan culture and "stan" behavior

- Social media platforms and global engagement

Week 6 (Feb 23, 2026): * K-pop and Globalization

- Hallyu (Korean Wave) and international success
- Cultural exchange and localization of K-pop
- K-pop's influence on Western pop and other Asian markets
- Collaborations with international artists

Week 7 (Mar 2, 2026): Midterm

Week 8 (Mar 9, 2026): Learning About Idol Groups and Their Representative Songs

- Overview of first, second, third, and fourth-generation K-pop groups
- Analysis of iconic songs and their influence on the industry
  - **First Generation (1990s–early 2000s):**
    - H.O.T. – "Candy"
    - S.E.S. – "I'm Your Girl"

Week 9 (Mar 16, 2026): Learning About Idol Groups and Their Representative Songs

- **Second Generation (mid-2000s–early 2010s):**
  - Girls' Generation – "Gee"
  - BIGBANG – "Fantastic Baby"

Week 10 (Mar 23, 2026): Spring Break

Week 11 (Mar 30, 2026): Third Generation (mid-2010s–early 2020s):
  - BTS – "DNA"
  - BLACKPINK – "DDU-DU DDU-DU"

Week 12 (April 6, 2026): Fourth Generation (2020s–present):
  - Stray Kids – "God's Menu"
  - aespa – "Next Level"

Week 13 (April 13, 2026): * Final Projects and Presentations

- Student presentations on selected K-pop topics
- Course wrap-up and reflections

Week 14 (April 20, 2026): Final Exam

May 18-30, 2026: Study Abroad in South Korea

Grade Description

A	The student has excelled in all areas of study. He or she performs exceptionally well in studio class and in juries, incorporating all elements of voice study that have been a focus during voice lessons. He or she has thoroughly maintained a portfolio to the printed standard and has shown development in his or her artistic sensibility throughout the semester by meeting the short- and long-term goals. His or her attendance was unblemished.
B	The student met most of the short- and long-term goals established at the beginning of the semester and prepared the appropriate number of songs for juries. His or her portfolio was mostly complete, but lacked a sense of artistic growth throughout the semester. The student's attendance was good, but not ideal.
C	The student met few of the goals agreed upon at the beginning of the semester. He or she did not prepare the required number of pieces for juries. He or she was missing large portions of the portfolio, and its completion was haphazard. Attendance was far below average.
D	The student performed poorly in all three subjects and did not demonstrate interest or initiative to improve throughout the semester.
F	The student failed to meet any of the teacher's expectations of progress, effort, or attendance.

Artificial Intelligence

AI is encouraged during the course, and appropriate acknowledgment is expected.

You can use AI programs (ChatGPT, Copilot, etc.) in this course. These programs can be powerful tools for learning and other productive pursuits, including completing assignments in less time, helping you generate new ideas, or serving as a personalized learning tool. However, your ethical responsibilities as a student remain the same. You must follow UT Tyler's Honor Code and uphold the highest standards of academic honesty. This applies to all uncited or improperly cited content, whether created by a human or in collaboration with an AI tool. If you use an AI tool to develop content for an assignment, you must cite the tool's contribution to your work.

UT Tyler Honor Code

Every member of the UT Tyler community joins together to embrace: Honor and integrity that will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do.
Students Rights and Responsibilities
To know and understand the policies that affect your rights and responsibilities as a student at UT Tyler, please follow this link: http://www.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php
Campus Carry
We respect the right and privacy of students 21 and over who are duly licensed to carry concealed weapons in this class. License holders are expected to behave responsibly and keep a handgun secure and concealed. More information is available at http://www.uttyler.edu/about/campus-carry/index.php
UT Tyler a Tobacco-Free University

All forms of tobacco will not be permitted on the UT Tyler main campus, branch campuses, and any property owned by UT Tyler. This applies to all members of the University community, including students, faculty, staff, University affiliates, contractors, and visitors.

Forms of tobacco not permitted include cigarettes, cigars, pipes, water pipes (hookah), bidis, kreteks, electronic cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chewing tobacco, and all other tobacco products.

There are several cessation programs available to students looking to quit smoking, including counseling, quitlines, and group support. For more information on cessation programs please visit www.uttyler.edu/tobacco-free.

Grade Replacement/Forgiveness and Census Date Policies

Students repeating a course for grade forgiveness (grade replacement) must file a Grade Replacement Contract with the Enrollment Services Center (ADM 230) on or before the Census Date of the semester in which the course will be repeated. Grade Replacement Contracts are available in the Enrollment Services Center or at http://www.uttyler.edu/registrar. Each semester's Census Date can be found on the Contract itself, on the Academic Calendar, or in the information pamphlets published each semester by the Office of the Registrar.

Failure to file a Grade Replacement Contract will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. Undergraduates are eligible to exercise grade replacement for only three course repeats during their career at UT Tyler; graduates are eligible for two grade replacements. Full policy details are printed on each Grade Replacement Contract.

The Census Date is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions of which students need to be aware. These include:

- Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.
- Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date)
- Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a "W"grade)
- Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment
- Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid

State-Mandated Course Drop Policy

Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the census date (See Academic Calendar for the specific date).

Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Enrollment Services Center and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Enrollment Services Center if you have any questions.

Disability/Accessibility Services

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University of Texas at Tyler offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychological disabilities. If you have a disability, including a non-visible diagnosis such as a learning disorder, chronic illness, TBI, PTSD, ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment, you are encouraged to visit https://hood.accessiblelearning.com/UTTyler and fill out the New Student application. The Student Accessibility and Resources (SAR) office will contact you when your application has been submitted and an appointment with Cynthia Lowery, Assistant Director of Student Services/ADA Coordinator. For more information, including filling out an application for services, please visit the SAR webpage at http://www.uttyler.edu/disabilityservices, the SAR office located in the University Center, # 3150 or call 903.566.7079.

Student Absence due to Religious Observance

Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor of such absences by the second class meeting of the semester.

Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities

If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.

Social Security and FERPA Statement

It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.

Emergency Exits and Evacuation

Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructor's directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not re-enter the building unless given permission by University Police, Fire department, or Fire Prevention Services.

Student Standards of Academic Conduct

Disciplinary proceedings may be initiated against any student who engages in scholastic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.

i. "Cheating" includes, but is not limited to:

- Copying from another student's test paper;
- using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test;
- failure to comply with instructions given by the person administering the test;
- possession during a test of materials which are not authorized by the person giving the test, such as class notes or specifically designed "crib notes". The presence of textbooks constitutes a violation if they have been specifically prohibited by the person administering the test;
- using, buying, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program;
- Collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or other assignment without authority;
- discussing the contents of an examination with another student who will take the examination;
- divulging the contents of an examination, for the purpose of preserving questions for use by another, when the instructors has designated that the examination is not to be removed from the examination room or not to be returned or to be kept by the student;
- substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for oneself to take a course, a test, or any course-related assignment;
- paying or offering money or other valuable thing to, or coercing another person to obtain an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program or information about an unadministered test, test key, home solution or computer program;
- falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other academic work offered for credit;
- taking, keeping, misplacing, or damaging the property of The University of Texas at Tyler, or of another, if the student knows or reasonably should know that an unfair academic advantage would be gained by such conduct; and
- misrepresenting facts, including providing false grades or resumes, for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit or injuring another student academically or financially.

ii. "Plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to, the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another's work and the submission of it as one's own academic work offered for credit.

iii. "Collusion" includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any section of the rules on scholastic dishonesty.

iv. All written work that is submitted will be subject to review by plagiarism software.

Resources available to UT Tyler Students

- UT Tyler Counseling Center (available to all students): (903.566.7254)
- MySSP App (24/7 access to Student Support Program counseling through phone or chat and online wellness resources available in a variety of languages)
- Student Assistance and Advocacy Center
- Military and Veterans Success Center (supports for our military-affiliated students)
- UT Tyler Patriot Food Pantry
- UT Tyler Financial Aid and Scholarships
- UT Tyler Student Business Services (pay or set up payment plans, etc.)
- UT Tyler Registrar's Office

- [Office of International Programs](#)
- [Title IX Reporting](#)
- [Patriots Engage](#) (available to all students. Get engaged at UT Tyler.)
- UT Tyler Writing Center (903.565.5995), writingcenter@uttyler.edu
- UT Tyler Tutoring Center (903.565.5964), tutoring@uttyler.edu
- The Mathematics Learning Center, RBN 4021, this is the open access computer lab for math students, with tutors on duty to assist students who are enrolled in early-career courses.