

PARTICIPATION IN DEBATE AS A PART OF CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT FOR STUDENTS OF SEMESTER 3 IN THE ACADEMIC SESSION 2025-2026: A REPORT

The department of English conventionally guides the students to make and submit projects as compliance for tutorial of 1 credit for Honours papers. However, in the year 2025-2026, the department noticed the enthusiasm for debate during the Students Week held in January 2026. Hence the department decided to motivate all students in participatory learning and make all the students of Semester 3 participate in debate as compliance for a tutorial on DSCC 3 titled 'Introduction to English Literature (Drama)'. The students also welcomed the decision. The topics were given from two dramas taught in class, William Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* and George Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*. The topics were as follows:

1. Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* projects hatred and religious intolerance.
2. Shylock is a tragic hero in *The Merchant of Venice*.
3. Shaw's *Arms and the Man* is a romantic play despite its subtitle.

All the students of Semester 3 participated enthusiastically in the debate. The majority of the students debated on Shakespeare's play discussing the various facets of fanaticism as well as intolerance towards the Jews in early modern European society and also its interrelatedness with money and commerce. Students debating on Shaw's play discussed the meaning of romanticism in popular culture of the early twentieth century and Shaw's redefinition of it. The students realised the significance of the plays in today's world. The teachers, acting as judges, awarded marks to the students judging their levels of involvement with the texts and the topics.



