



The Division of Classics
of the
Department of Modern & Classical Languages, Literatures & Cultures
University of Kentucky
presents

A Question of Time: Apollonius' *Argonautica* and the Jubilee of Ptolemy III Euergetes I

a lecture by

Jackie Murray

Assistant Professor of Classics at Skidmore College

Monday April 9 - 12:00 noon

Student Center 211

(above the UK Bookstore)

Prof. Murray's current research focuses on the 3rd-century BCE author Apollonius Rhodius of Alexandria. Apollonius' epic poem, *Argonautica*, traces the voyage of Jason and the Argonauts in search of the golden fleece. In the course of the poem, Apollonius is careful to let his readers know how much time has passed, by references to astronomical bodies taken from the skies of the time of his writing. With this information and the aid of records of ancient astronomical observations and modern planetarium software, it is possible to find a year matching the astronomical events described in the poem. The year turns out to be 238 BCE, the jubilee year of the Egyptian king Ptolemy Euergetes, and the year he introduced the first official 365.25 day calendar. With its detailed attention to time and the study of the heavens, Apollonius' poem, can be seen as a tribute to Ptolemy's calendar and the astronomical science required to create it.

Prof. Murray attended the University of Guelph, the University of Western Ontario, and holds her Ph.D. from the University of Washington. She currently holds the Andrew Heiskell/National Endowment for the Humanities Post-Doctoral Rome Prize at the American Academy in Rome. She has also held an NEH Fellowship in the Institute for Enabling Geospatial Scholarship and at the UCLA Summer Institute on Models of Ancient Rome, and participated in the Mellon Faculty Seminar and University of Venice Advanced Seminar in Ancient Mediterranean Literature. She is the author of numerous articles on Hellenistic literature, and is currently completing a book entitled *Anchoring Apollonius' Argonautica in Time*.

