Augustus commands attention with his imperial pose while gazing into the distance. The slight bend of his knee indicates contrapposto, a shift in weight. Despite the fragmentary nature of his arms, protruding veins demonstrate considerable strength and a body on the verge of movement. Drapery folds cascade down his robes akin to a waterfall. His unique patina references the color of the original marble sculpture. Shadows linger on Augustus’ sharp, albeit proud features and the folds carved into his robes. Lighting plays a significant role in enhancing his presence. How do you feel standing before such an impressive figure?

The impressive size of the Poseidon torso draws you in by the sheer presence and muscularity, despite its fragmentary state. Seams in his pectoral area indicate the separate original pieces from which this cast was made. Anatomical accuracy, including conspicuous veins across his left shoulder and ribs, reflect a deep understanding of the body already by the fifth century BCE. His posture suggests that he is poised for action. How might we interpret his action? Could Poseidon be holding a trident?

This brochure was created by students in the Fall 2014 Seminar on Plaster Casts: S. Berger ’15, M. Conley ’17, F. Haborak ’15, L. Lopez-Cano ’15, J. Morán ’15, L. Murphy ’17, S. Stathis, ’15, I. Telonis ’17, T. Walsh, ’15.

Fairfield University’s plaster cast collection began in 1991 with 37 casts on long-term renewable loan from the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Today, due to a series of gifts from individual donors and museums, the collection comprises 90 casts representing the Ancient Near East, Greece, Rome, Medieval France, and Renaissance Italy. Nearly all the casts are 100 years old or more, classifying them as historic. Several of the casts still retain parting lines, the sharp creases formed from the piece molding technique. Their crisp edges, which should never be removed, reflect the excellent state of the molds at the time the works were cast. Casts develop their own patina over time, and the current philosophy is to work with the existing patina whenever possible, rather than tint the entire cast one color.
The Great Eleusinian Relief pulls you in with a high level of detail, noted in the intricate sandals, stylized hair, and the fluidity of the drapery. Now that you are fully engaged with the cast, nuances begin to make themselves known. The presence of the torches in the females’ hands references a nocturnal celebration. The cast has numerous sharp parting lines that indicate the use of high quality molds from the piece-mold making process. Through size, the superiority of the outer two females is demonstrated with respect to the central male.

*Why would the two superior females be more stiffly modeled than the relaxed central male?*

Praxiteles (in the manner of)  
(Greek, active ca. 375—340 BCE)  
*Artemis, called the “Gabii Diana,”* 14–37 CE  
Plaster cast from Roman marble after Greek original  
Louvre, Paris  
Lent by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1991

When entering the side gallery, the elegance and poise of *Artemis (Gabii Diana)* captivates your attention. Although her head is not present, the beauty of her body, outlined by the drapery, defines the importance of this goddess. The way in which the drapery catches the light enhances its airy and feminine appearance and its realistic nature. As your eye moves from her bare left shoulder down to her delicate laced sandals, the intricate details of her drapery, including tiny seams and layering, reflect the uniqueness of the ideal female body. The simple action of tying her cape illustrates her gracefulfulness, perhaps demonstrating a different side of the goddess of the hunt. *What sentiment do you think Praxiteles was trying to convey to his audience?*

Known as *Euthydikos’ Kore,* this cast is an excellent example of a young female figure from the Archaic Period. Originally part of a larger free-standing sculpture, this maiden would have been smaller than life-size. Her hair cascades down her body, resting naturally over pleated drapery. Over her right shoulder, her diagonal mantle falls across her body and under her left arm. Originally carved out of marble, remnants of color suggest that details of the sculpture have been enhanced with the application of paint or polychromy. This practice of polychromy in sculpture and architecture was widespread during the sixth and fifth centuries BCE, but rarely appears reproduced on casts. *Upon examining the details of her face, do you notice any color variation in her features?*