

Boxer:  
The College Spirit

Standing about 18-20" tall, the Boxer statue came originally from the Ming dynasty era in China. Believed to be a Chilin, the statue served as the household god for an apocathary before his family hit hard times. This forced the man to begin selling off his belongings in hopes of paying off his creditors. He met Dr. Elkanah Walker, an 1867 graduate of Pacific University, and sold him the "dog" for \$5.00. While not truly a dog, the Boxer has no exact name, but remains a mythical animal of mystery. Calling Boxer a dog was an early attempt to describe the statue in western terms, which appears as part dragon, lion, dog, and deer. The name Boxer was coined in 1908 after the statue, already called the "College Spirit" was taken from its pedistal in Brighton Chapel. The name refers to the Boxer Rebellion in China, a cultural movement which was suppressed by the Empress Dowager.

Boxer's history at Pacific is one of excitement. Various groups are forever trying to possess the mascot, which never returned to Brighton Chapel. No longer just the mascot of a single class, the Boxer statue is passed among the students through "Boxer Tosses," which are best described as good-natured wrestling matches sometimes involving as many as 300 students. The longest of these was nine hours long, with the shortest being only 40 minutes. In these toss-outs, Boxer has been thrown from the roof of Old College Hall, buried in the local cemetary, submerged in the Willamette River, and completely encased in ice. The toss-outs have been known to churn their way across Forest Grove lawns or end in high speed chases across Washington County. In past years students from Linfield College in McMinnville, were even known to try taking Boxer.

In 1969--one year after the statue became the official University mascot-- the original Boxer disappeared, possibly with a fraternity whose charter had been revoked that year. Students were accostomed to Boxer disappearing for up to two years at a time so the alarm was not raised for several years. In 1981 students tired of waiting so they raised the money for a second statue to be cast. Since then Boxer has been on the loose and no one ever knows where they'll see the mascot next. The Boxer Toss remains an infrequent, but always timely event, which most students look forward to witnessing. In this way, students have been carrying on the "fighting spirit" for 85 years, making the Boxer Toss Pacific's oldest tradition.



