

College Contagion

And you thought your Calculus final was the scariest thing today...

CHARACTER CREATION - Pick the following:

Name

Year - Freshmen, Sophomore, Junior, Senior, Super-Senior, Grad Student, etc.

Major - Biology, English, Mechanical Engineering, etc.

Stereotype - Select a main (4) and secondary (5) stereotype. The others are 6s.

1. Greek (alcohol) - schmoozing
2. Geek (caffeine) - smarts
3. Jock (sports drink) - athleticism
4. Hipster (drugs) - keeping your cool

Relationships with other players (at least 2) - Roommate, Hookup, Teammate, Lab Partner, etc.

Starting Location and Equipment appropriate to scenario

Example: at Physics lecture with a Backpack, Notebook, Pen, and Water Bottle

MECHANICS

Tasks

If a task might go wrong, the ZM will pick the relevant stereotype. That stat is your target grade.

Roll a d6, and if it is greater than or equal to your target grade, then you pass.

You can decrease 1 stereotype stat by 1 by consuming the mentioned substance. If you consume a different substance, you lose the benefit of the previous substance.

If you are a relevant major, you can decrease the target grade on a task by 1.

If you use relevant equipment, you can decrease the target grade on a task by 1.

Your relationships may affect the target grade by +/-1 at the ZM's discretion.

Infection

If you are hurt by a zombie or otherwise exposed, roll a d6 when you next "hole up". On a 1, 2, or 3, you are visibly infected. Unless you cure the infection, you will turn into a zombie on your next escape.

Flow of the game

The game begins with each player's first zombie encounter. Meet all of the other players at your pre-determined zombie apocalypse meeting spot and "hole up".

While you are "holed up", you can gather gear and plan. If anyone rolls a 1 on any task, the zombies break in and you must escape!

During your escape, you are on the run across campus until you find another place to "hole up". Repeat.

The game ends when you all become zombies, end the contagion, or escape campus. Stay safe.

College Contagion Zombie Master (ZM) Guide

You were always the leader on group projects, weren't you?

CONCEPT AND SETUP

Play with current or past classmates so you have shared experiences and references to draw on.

The rules are simple and settings are familiar to make it an easy introduction to roleplaying.

Players can play themselves (especially new players). For more chaos, have them play each other.

Get a physical copy of the campus map so you can point to exactly where the players are.

SUGGESTED SCENARIOS – pick a scenario to fit your group, but here's some inspiration

Biology: Classic lab experiment gone wrong turns into an epidemic

Computer Science: Virtual reality game is acted out in real life

Electrical Engineering: Human augmentation takes over the body

English: H.P. Lovecraft story comes to life

History: Ancient artifact or curse unleashed

Philosophy: Philosophical zombies (people who act normally but are not consciousness) actually exist

Psychology: Unethical experiment has unintended side effects on subjects' sanity

SETUP

The toughest part of creating the scenario is explaining why the players are special on a college campus.

Why were they one of the few not infected? What makes them qualified to deal with it?

Bake these answers into the first few moments of the game so they have a clear purpose in playing.

Typically, they should escape or end the infestation, but it helps to clarify exactly how that can happen.

TIPS FOR RUNNING THE GAME

Have a few inside jokes and well-known people ready to sprinkle into the game. It's fun for an infamous professor or that annoying guy who lived on your floor to show up.

Incorporate different types of zombies based on their living counterpart e.g. the football team.

Rely on shared knowledge for describing scenes. Compared to a standard game, you probably have a much more vivid image of what locations look like. So do your players. Spare the explanation.