Community Colleges are required to have an objective mechanism to screen and accept nursing student into the programs. Using standardized exams is a common method used by most nursing programs. The NLN-PAX exam is a general studies exam similar to the ACT or SAT exams that are completed during high school. There are three (3) portions to the exam which include verbal, math and science. Each of the three tests is completed separately and each portion is a timed examination. The examination is proctored by a representative from the EvCC nursing program. The exam allows individuals entering the nursing program the ability to prove their competency in the verbal math and science areas.

Preparing for the exam
Preparation for the exam is essential. Students who prepare for the exam are often more successful in attaining higher composite scores the first time over student who does not take the time to prepare. Everyone has different strengths and weaknesses so for the exam it is important to review even in the areas of strength but to also take extra time to prepare in weak areas. There are many books available to prepare for the exam. The NLN-PAX offers their own study guide for the exam which includes practice tests. Any of the study guides are useful to prepare you for the exam. It is also very important to complete the prerequisite courses for nursing (Biology, Chemistry, and Math which you assessed out of) prior to taking the NLN exam. Remember you only have one opportunity to take the exam so take the time to prepare.

Additional Study Tips
This information has been provided by students who have taken the exam in the past and who have a variety of backgrounds and length of time since the prerequisite course were completed.

Verbal:
The verbal portion of the exam is the most challenging for the majority of nursing students. The verbal portion of the test includes vocabulary and reading comprehension. Vocabulary is always challenging so try to read the “word of the day” available in the local newspapers. Another hint provided by was the book “Vocabulary for Dummies”. This book is available in most bookstores. Reading comprehension is also challenging and since the exam is timed. Many students do not finish the verbal section due to the time limit which causes a lower score. It is important for each individual to determine how they best comprehend when reading. When practicing reading comprehension it is essential to understand the best way for you to comprehend and answer the questions. If an individual needs to reread the paragraph several times to answer the questions, time is lost and this could result in a lower exam score. It is best to practice reading and answering questions and time yourself to find what works best to fit your style.

Math
The math portion of the exam incorporates many areas of math from basic addition and subtraction through fractions, decimals, geometry and algebra. The amount of review required will depend upon when the student last completed math courses. Basic college level algebra and geometry books are a good resource to refresh the math skills.

Science
The science portion of the exam includes biology, chemistry, physics and anatomy. Although completing anatomy and physiology course is not required before taking the NLN exam, in many instances it may be helpful. Physics is not required for nursing and the questions are basic knowledge. If science courses were completed some time ago a review of general college level biology and chemistry text books may be needed.