

# MONTANA ONLINE NURSE PRECEPTOR PROGRAM



“Preceptors live at the intersections of education and practice and of the present and the future. They practice at the point where theoretical learning meets reality and where the gap between current and needed knowledge and expertise gets filled. Preceptors are the essential link between what nurses are taught and what they do, and between what nurses know and what they need to know. Having competent preceptors is critical to educating nursing students, transitioning new graduate nurses to the professional nursing role, and transitioning experienced nurses to new roles and specialties” (Ulrich, 2012, p. xxv). The purpose of the MT Preceptor Program is to prepare preceptors to effectively support the development of students and new nurses in their academic progression within the profession.

## Five Modules (17.5 contact hours possible)

Module* (CE)	Title	Primary Objective
I (3.8)	Role Description	Define the roles and relationships critical to preceptor success.
II (3.9)	Communication	Examine communication strategies to enhance the preceptor/preceptee experience.
III (4.2)	Learning Styles	Describe teaching/learning strategies to improve preceptee performance.
IV (4.6)	Planning	Analyze steps in designing a strong learning experience for preceptees.
V (1.0)	Evaluation	Examine strategies for evaluation of preceptees.

\*Please see page 3 for more information about how contact hours are received based on the assigned reading (Ulrich, 2012), webinars, and the blog.

# Preceptor Learning Circles (Modules)

## Required Course Book:

Mastering Precepting: A Nurse's Handbook for Success (Paperback). Beth Ulrich. Published by SIGMA Theta Tau International, Center for Nursing Press, 2011.

**What is a Learning Circle?** A learning circle is a method of organizing material to encourage inquiry, creativity, and both independent and group approaches to learning. The method incorporates Mezirow's adult learning theory of transformative learning.

**Components of the Learning Circle Format (also known as a Module):** A learning circle consists of eight components: Introduction, Primary Objective, Preceptor/Nurse Inquiry, Pre Class Preparation, In Class Activity, Post Class Activity, Learning Links, To Learn More, and Learning Assessment.

**Introduction:** *Preview the circle.* This section presents an overview of the topic to be covered. The preceptor/nurse is given a preview of the importance of precepting the next generation of nurses and potential future employees.

**Primary Objective:** *Highlights the primary purpose of the module.* Describes what the participant will learn.

**Preceptor/Nurse Inquiry:** Questions or statements that establish curiosity about the topic.

1. Pique interest in the topic.
2. Stimulate critical thinking.
3. Relate to the content outline.
4. Relate to previous knowledge (other learning circles).
5. Guide the pursuit of knowledge.

**Pre-Module Preparation:** *Prepare the circle.* Nurses work best when they have the opportunity to prepare for a learning opportunity. Activities are designed to help the preceptor apply the concepts and theory to the precepting experience. All assignments (reading, exploration of pertinent Internet sites) are outlined in this section. Contact hours are awarded based on the average time it takes to complete the reading related to the module.

**Module Webinar Activity:** *Expand the circle.* A variety of methods are used to help nurses clarify information and explore concepts. The goal is to bring nurses into active involvement with the module content. Some material is best covered in the powerpoint but stories, activities, examples, and visualization exercises make main points interactive and will support learning. **Contact hours awarded.**

**Post Class Activity:** *Close the circle.* What have you learned? Can you answer the Preceptor Inquiry questions? “All pre-learned insights and discoveries require application to complete the cycle.” (Boyatzis et al.,1995, p. 239). A passcode protected blog is available to engage in conversation with faculty and other preceptors to apply the module content and discuss the challenges and rewards of precepting students. **Additional contact hours will be awarded for blog interaction.**

**Learning Links:** *Connect the circle.* Encourages the preceptor to link the circle with past or future experience and knowledge. This activity helps nurses connect ideas, events, and experiences.

**To Learn More:** *Support the circle.* List all additional reading, articles, videos, Internet sites that will enhance and further expand the preceptor’s insight into the module topic.

**Learning Assessment:** *Evaluate the circle.* How did this learning circle help you learn the material? How can you imagine applying the knowledge you have gained?

**Contact Hours Possible:**

Activity	Module I	Module II	Module III	Module IV	Module V	TOTAL
Reading	1.8	1.9	2.2	2.6		8.5
Webinar	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	5.0
Blog	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0		4.0
TOTAL	3.8	3.9	4.2	4.6	1.0	17.5