

Lake Area Technical College

Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) Program

Strategies for Sharing Expectations with Students

Communicate early:

- Update the information sent to the PTA Programs regularly as students review the Clinical Site Information Form prior to selecting their sites.
- Contact the student 2-3 weeks prior to the beginning of the internship. Provide information the student will need immediately - hours, parking, directions to the department, dress code. Be inviting and enthusiastic about the student's internship opportunities.

Communicate explicitly:

- During orientation
 - Site objectives for the student
 - Where you expect the student to be at midterm and final (e.g., % caseload, level of independence)
- During all interactions
 - Ask the student to relate back his/her understanding of the discussion
- Communicate on what you expect to see, hear or feel - on the student's demonstrated performance.
- Pace the expectations from easy to more difficult

Communicate often and consistently:

- During daily informal meetings
- During short weekly formal meetings
- Don't change your expectations without clearly communicating your reasoning
- Formally at midterm
- Formally at final

Communicate selectively:

- Focus your discussion on the most important areas where the student needs improvement, rather than everything
- Ask the student to identify the most critical areas where he/she needs improvement

Communicate clearly in writing:

- State expectations in writing.
- Have the student write his/her understanding of the expectations.
- Review expectations on a regular basis - note which expectations have been met and which have not. If not met, why not?
- Modify expectations as needed for student learning.
- Involve the student in writing new expectations.
- Clearly share the consequences of not meeting the expectations