Strategies for Sharing Expectations with Students

Communicate early:
• Update the information sent to the PT Programs regularly as students review the Clinical Site Information Form prior to selecting their sites.
• Contact the student 2-6 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
  o Site objectives for the student
  o Where you expect the student to be at midterm and final (e.g., % caseload, level of independence)
• During all interactions
  o 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