

Examine opportunities and threats

The next step is to conduct an assessment of the program's environment. The rationale for examining opportunities for and threats facing the program is to provide context for the self-study.

Opportunities: Opportunities are external factors that are not entirely under the control of the program, but if acted upon, will help the program flourish. Opportunities take many forms, such as access to expanded populations for ambulatory care at a local health center, partnering with an institution with a simulation center, other collaborations, or availability of new clinical or educational technology through agreements with external parties.

Threats: Threats also are largely beyond the control of the program, and like opportunities, come in many forms. They could result from a change in support for education at the national level, changing priorities at the institutional or state levels, or from local factors, such as erosion of a primary ambulatory system based on voluntary faculty. The benefit of assessing program threats is that plans can be developed to mitigate their effect.