Commercial leased space is by its nature changeable. The average office lease space changes tenants every seven years. What is now a law office was an advertising agency 8 years ago and will be a brokerage firm 10 years in the future. Between each of these tenants the slate may be wiped clean with virtually all partitions, cabinetry, and finishes torn out to facilitate a new “build out”. Each remodel may generate large quantities of wasted building materials, time and energy. In recognition of this potentially wasteful cycle of development LEED now offers credits for longer leases and for reuse of building elements from previous tenants. This motivates designers and clients to reuse “leftover” elements from previous designs but does not necessarily result in a greater understanding of what framework would stand the best chance of reuse over multiple tenants.

We will begin our studio by analyzing permit drawings issued over time for the same floor of an iconic Portland office building and analyzing what (if any) elements persist over time. We will also talk to architects and developers about commercial office space. With this insight we will examine theories and strategies used by other designers to create flexibility over time.

Our studio design project will involve designing the same floor of our chosen building for several different occupants such that a great number of elements can be salvaged, retained, or re-used in all design scenarios. This will include not only partition walls and cabinetry but also finishes, furnishings and equipment.

Students will be exploring this design from a spatial and construction standpoint but also with regard to visual vocabulary since many elements in commercial interiors are discarded due to a poor stylistic “fit” or a “dated” quality.

### Special Objectives

- to mesh research with design effectively
- to learn to generate and develop ideas quickly.
- to communicate effectively especially with regard to mixing written communication with graphics. I expect students to document their thinking and process.
- to integrate building systems with design ideas in creative ways
- to evaluate design proposals based on stated objectives

### Methods of Working

- Students should plan for at least one trip to Portland in the course of the term.
- Students should be prepared to discuss assigned readings and to develop a strategic design philosophy for their projects.
- Students will be working in groups especially during analysis phases.
- We will be using diagrams extensively for analysis and clarification.
- We will use some quantitative analysis methods and take-offs.
- Students should be adept at or willing to learn digital drawing methods.

*If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with the instructor in the first week of the term. Please request that the Counselor for Students with Disabilities send a letter verifying your disability.*