# Comparative History of Public Institutions

## Prof. Cristina Bon

[The course syllabus is cross-registered with the Degree course in Political Sciences and International Relations, under the course name *History of contemporary administrative systems*]

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course will analyse the relationships between politics and public administration, from a compared historical perspective. In particular, it will examine some of the key elements of institutional and administrative development in unitary and federal government systems: constitutional principles, central organization, centre-periphery relationships and local government. The institutional and administrative model studied will be the Italian one and its main transformations. In addition, the course will carry out a historical-institutional analysis of contemporary administrative systems, with specific attention to the British and American experiences. With reference to the aforementioned case studies, the course will examine the relationship between politics and administration in the recruitment of administrative staff and in the development of bureaucracies.

*Knowledge and understanding*: at the end of the course, students will acquire the historical knowledge useful for understanding and comparing different contemporary western political-administrative systems (Europe - North America) and will know the main models and methods of managing administrative processes and how bureaucracies work from the nineteenth century to the second half of the twentieth century.

*Ability to apply knowledge and understanding*: at the end of the course, students will be able to master the essential terminology of the bureaucratic-administrative sector, evaluate complex contemporary institutional and administrative systems and independently carry out on a comparative level a historical-institutional analysis of single problems related to centre-periphery relations in unitary and federal systems, the management of local governments, the interaction between public administration and civil society, the system and decision-making processes.

***COURSE CONTENT***

- The comparative dimension in Public Administration

- Relations between the centre and the periphery: the Administrative Models

- Forms of local government

- The Italian administrative system: from national and administrative unification to the reform of Title V of the republican Constitution

– The British administrative system: from nineteenth-century liberalism to the *agentification* process

– The American administrative system: from dual federalism to coercive federalism

*– New Public Management*

***READING LIST***

**Students who will have the opportunity to regularly attend lectures in the first and second term can prepare the exam on the lecture notes, on the reading indicated by the lecturer in class and on the following text:**

G. Astuto, *L’amministrazione italiana. Dal centralismo napoleonico al federalismo amministrativo,* Carocci, Rome, 2009 (chapters 3, 5, 7, 8, 9).

**Students who for any reason cannot regularly attend lectures in the first and second term can study the following texts:**

G. Astuto, *L’amministrazione italiana. Dal centralismo napoleonico al federalismo amministrativo,* Carocci, Rome, 2009.

E. Gualmini, *L’amministrazione nelle democrazie contemporanee,* Laterza, Bari, latest edition (original edition 2003).

One text to be chosen from:

C. Bon, *Alla ricerca di una più perfetta Unione. Convenzioni e Costituzioni negli Stati Uniti della prima metà dell’800,* Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2012 (Part I; Part II, chp. 1)

L. Stroppiana, *Stati Uniti*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2021 (latest edition)

S. Troilo, *Gli enti locali tra autonomia e integrazione con lo Stato. Il modello del local government britannico*, Aracne, 2013 (chapters. 1,2,3,4,5,6)

***TEACHING METHOD***

The course includes lectures by lecturers and possible meeting with external guests. During the spring semester there will be a series of optional practical classes on a subject of relevant interest for the discipline. All information relating to guest speakers and practical classes in the second semester will be made available on the Blackboard platform.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

*Assessment method*

Students will be assessed by means of a written examination. The examination consists of six short open-ended questions, equally concerning the topics of the first and second term. Each correct answer will be given six points maximum. The exam – in absence of impending conditions – takes place before a Commission chaired by the lecturer. The mark is expressed in thirtieths: the pass mark is 18/30. The maximum mark is 30/30: in addition to this mark the Examining Commission may decide to award *cum laude* when deserved.

Students attending the optional practical classes in the second semester will be able to take a self-assessment test on content of the practical classes and the test result will be taken into consideration for the overall assessment. More details on assessment methods for the practical classes will be provided on the Blackboard platform closer in due time.

Students who will have the opportunity to regularly attend lectures may take a written test at the end of each term to assess their level of knowledge on the programme indicated in the reading list section.

*Assessment Criteria*

The questions are designed to assess the knowledges acquired based on the expected learning outcomes with particular attention to abilities in referring to theoretical basis and case studies. The exam also evaluates students’ ability to express themselves accurately and to demonstrate their command of chronological order. Students will also be assessed on their mastery of the subject’s specific terminology and their ability to politically contextualise notions. Finally, students will be evaluated on the relevance of their answers, their reasoned and coherent structuring of the discussion and their ability to identify conceptual links and unsolved issues.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

In order to efficiently attend the course, students should have basic knowledge in the fields of History of Political Institutions, Contemporary History and Public Law.

Further information can be found on the lecturer’s webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.