**Doctoral Examination**

**Policy Process and Analysis**

**Fall 2018**

***Part I. Please answer one of the following two questions:***

1. Consider the policy process.  There are a number of theoretical explanations of that process that might link aspects of policy creation - such as theories of justice or positive theories of regulation (i.e., that there is a market for regulations) – together with theories of implementation – such as capture theory or considerations of street-level bureaucracy.

i. Outline one coherent viewpoint of the policy process that tells the story of how policies are conceived and actually implemented (on-the-ground, as it were). Use whichever pieces of the available (often competing) theories you find compelling – just be sure that your description of the process is coherent.

ii. Given your theoretical understanding of the policy process (as outlined in 1(i) above), what barriers exist between the “original intent” of the policy maker and the actual form that the policy takes upon implementation?

iii. Given your understanding of the process, how responsive is the policy environment to changing public needs or empirical realities? How does this affect your view of the average adequacy of our policy environment?

2. The policy process can be used strategically to "water down" or strip a proposed or previously implemented policy of its effectiveness. Researchers in public policy use a variety of models of the public policy process, including models focused on punctuated equilibria, incrementalism, policy streams, policy cycles, systems models, and the advocacy coalition framework. Choose and explain two policy process models (you may include others not listed here). Show how each model would explain when and how a policy can be made more limited in its effectiveness.  Do this in the context of some actual, real-world, policy (either currently or from the past) that has been deliberately watered down at some point during or after its initial implementation. Discuss how this represents a conflict between either the legislative and executive branches, or between earlier and later regimes within on branch of government.

***PART II. Please answer one of the following two questions:***

3. Choose an area of public policy with which you have good familiarity and describe the latest major piece of legislation or regulatory initiative adopted within this domain. Next, briefly outline the alternative policy approaches that were set aside in favor of the actual policy established. Using concepts/frameworks/theories from the literature on problem definition and agenda setting, explain why the policymaking process on this issue developed and turned out as it did. Finally, what implications for program implementation (approach, challenges, likely effectiveness) follow from the fact that policymakers settled on this particular policy design while rejecting more or less ambitious alternatives?

4. What is the role of government?  Why do we have governments?  Discuss this question from two perspectives, at least one of which must be a neoclassical economic perspective. How do each of the two perspectives you discuss impact the way you would conduct policy analysis, especially the way that you measure whether a given program has met it’s goals?

***PART III. Please answer one of the following two questions:***

5. When economists discuss what something is worth, they are typically concerned with market prices or opportunity costs. Yet in many cases, markets do not exist or are inadequately competitive to reveal a true “market price.” For example, what is the price of a quality primary public school education? Describe two approaches that a researcher/analyst could use to assess the value of a non-market good of your choice. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each approach using examples from the literature and/or supporting evidence.

6. Two mechanisms for coping with a negative externality are the Coase Theorem and Pigouvian taxes.

1. Discuss the assumptions build in to each approach and under what circumstances each approach could be used in practice.  Also, discuss the relative merits and demerits of each approach.

b. Examine and discuss the distributional consequences of each policy.

c. How would each of your solutions work in the case of complaints by neighbors about odor and noise associated with a medical marijuana CBD extract production facility in Atlanta, GA?