Responding to a widespread belief that the field of composition studies is less unified than it was in the late twentieth century, editors Deborah Coxwell-Teague and Ronald F. Lunsford ask twelve well-known composition theorists to create detailed syllabi for a first-year composition course and then to explain their theoretical foundations. Each contributor to First-Year Composition: From Theory to Practice, discusses the major goals and objectives for their course, its major assignments, their use of outside texts, the role of reading and responding to these texts, the nature of classroom discussion, their methods of responding to student writing, and their assessment methods.

The contributors to First-Year Composition: From Theory to Practice include Chris Anson, Suresh Canagarajah, Douglas Hesse, Asao Inoue, Paula Mathieu, Teresa Redd, Alexander Reid, Jody, Shipka, Howard Tinberg, Victor Villanueva, Elizabeth Wardle and Doug Downs, and Kathleen Blake Yancey. Their twelve essays provide a window into these teachers' classrooms that will help readers, teachers, and writing program administrators appreciate the strengths of unity and diversity in rhetoric and composition as a field. The examples will empower new and experienced teachers and administrators. The editors frame the twelve essays with an introductory chapter that identifies key moments in composition's history and a concluding chapter that highlights the varied and useful ways the contributors approach the common challenges of the first-year composition course.