

Frank A. Watkins is an Associate Professor of Music and Director of Choral Studies at the University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire. A native of Omaha Nebraska, Watkins taught secondary choral music in Texas for six years. He holds degrees in piano performance from Jackson State University (BM), the University of Arkansas (MM), and choral conducting from Northwestern University (MM) and Michigan State University (DMA).

Watkins is in demand as guest conductor and clinician. In 2016, he was appointed Conductor and Music Director of the Eau Claire Chamber Orchestra. Recent engagements include the Big Nine Festival Honor Choir, the Great Northern Conference All- Conference Choir, Cloverbelt All-Conference Honor Choir, the 2018 Men’s Choir Festival, Big 8 Choral Festival, Northwest Suburban Conference Choir, the 2021 WSMA State Honors Mixed Choir, and the 2022 WCDA State Treble Choir. He has presented workshops on choral methods for the International Music and Christian Arts Conference, Michigan State University, and the Ohio State University. He has presented workshops at both the Wisconsin Music Educators State Convention and the National Collegiate Choral Organization National Conference. Additionally, he has taught internationally with Village Harmony. Choirs under his direction have performed at the Wisconsin Music Educators State Conference, Wisconsin Choral Directors Association State Conference, and the North Central Divisional Conference of the American Choral Directors Association.

In 2017-18, Watkins lead an International Fellows Trip to Dakar, Senegal to study the use of hip-hop and rap as a form of non-violent political protest. In 2019, Watkins will be a guest lecturer in Cape Town, South Africa. Watkins' research interests include the intersectionality of race, class, and gender in the music of African-American Women in the 21st century.

Watkins joined the faculty of the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire in 2014. A dynamic young conductor, Watkins’ love and passion are teaching. He believes that in order to educate, you must first inspire! It is his goal to make an impact...not just an impression on the lives of those that follow his baton.