What is an internship?

An internship is an experiential learning opportunity in a professional setting that offers meaningful mentorship, practical work, and professional development in a student's career interest or field of study.

The purpose is to provide students with an experience that informs their career path. Internships are a low-risk way to figure out what your ideal career is and allows you to narrow down what you like in a workplace versus what you don't.

GAINING SKILLS
The main goal of any internship should be to gain soft and hard skills. Soft skills are things like “strong communication” or “attention to detail” while hard skills are mastering programs like GIS or STATA.

DAY TO DAY EXPECTATIONS
Typically, interns will be working anywhere from 8-20 hours per week depending on the needs and expectations of the employer. The day to day of each internship is different, but across the board, it should have 5 basic components:

1) Arrive on time and check in with your supervisor on what needs to be accomplished that day
2) Plan out tasks and make a plan to accomplish them in the timeline suggested
3) Get to work on your plan
4) Converse with other interns or coworkers in the office
5) Check out with your supervisor before you leave to ensure that you completed all necessary tasks

WHAT SHOULD I WEAR?
Each organization and company is different, however, speaking to your hiring manager or human resources representative before arriving on your first day can help you figure out what the dress code is.

Typically, however, most workplaces require business casual to business professional for their employees. It's always okay to be overdressed than underdressed for your first day!

CAN I GET PAID AND GET CLASS CREDIT?
It depends! Some universities allow paid interns to also receive credit and some universities do not. The same goes for employers as some organizations will pay their interns and also sign off for credit while others will only allow one or the other.